

# THE LORD OF HUMANITY



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# THE LORD OF HUMANITY;

OR,

## THE TESTIMONY

OF

## HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS.

BY

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# THE LORD OF HUMANITY.

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## INTRODUCTION.

IN the present age, and probably for all time, mankind may be said to present three types of human character, and thence corresponding classes of persons, who will read the subject of which this essay treats with a widely different appreciativeness as a reflection of their own consciousness.

*Fear*, as a dominant or ruling passion, is ever apprehensive of some misery from which it would escape anyhow; and it is probable that the lower animals have no such feeling of fear, simply because they seem to possess no power of imagination to create the misery; their fear being moved by something objective to their senses, which possibly excites dread for the moment, they are at once entirely relieved when that objectiveness ceases; as often seen in a horse shying at something in the roadway. But man's creative power of imagination, one of his grandest prerogatives, giving birth to poetry and all

the fine arts, perpetually supplies the material for his inner outlook of fear, in endless suspicions, doubts, perplexities, delusions, and dreadful forebodings, or even takes the form of poetic conception, and although he is far more of a reasoning animal than his humbler friends, his intellect is no match for his imagination, and thus his whole consciousness may be pervaded, and his life consumed with fear—he falls a victim to himself. Then, also, he is apt to become intensely selfish in his constant struggle for self-preservation.

*Cupidity*—the love of gain—is another dominant passion in human nature, ever prompting to the ingathering of all that can be gotten for self, while fear watches against destruction, in their joint struggle for the preservation of self, with the attainment, apparently, of perfect happiness and enjoyment.

Yet, strangely belying the power of both these inborn passions of self, as the man of either such character emerges out of self, he grows and develops proportionately, attaining to a far higher consciousness; just as the benighted traveller loses the fearful horror of impenetrable darkness, as the dawn breaks upon his vision, and passing into the full blaze and warmth of unclouded sunlight, he beholds all the beauties of the material world in the face of nature.

*Love*, extending far beyond the narrow confines of

selfdom, is that dominant passion in the human breast, which, unlike the instincts of animal life, evokes the highest consciousness in man, and opens up to his view all the beauties and felicities which his moral nature is capable of realising. But love must have an object—ideal or real ; generally some living being, and in its highest form—a person. Fear is a more vague feeling, not necessarily having an objective character, but extends to anything that seems to be injurious to self. Thus, a chronic invalid often dreads the approach of winter. Love of a person is, moreover, reactionary. The mother sees in her infant's smile, and the instinctive effort to embrace her, a love which begets an immediate response, and she clasps the babe to her breast. Whereas nature, inanimate, may lose her charms by continued intercourse with her.

“ Boy, love you the stars ? ”

“ Yes ; when first they shine at night, better than near to morn.”

“ Fickle child ! are they more fair in twilight ? ” “ Master, no ! Brighter as night moves on ; but I forget their beauty, Gazing on them long.”

We never lose our love for a person by long-gazing on the object or contemplating the absent one.

These three dominant types of human character are reflected in the prevalent forms of religious thought and feeling.

1. That large class of persons whose religion is the outcome and expression of selfish Fear. After enduring months or years of disquietude and gloomy apprehension, with 'heart-affrighting hours,' and 'fear of the lake and pit,' as thus expressed in the language of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; at last *they* see their escape from unspeakable and endless torments of soul and body, by the expiation for their sin, in the sufferings of a perfectly *Innocent* Person, and Whose agony, as the punishment of a *substitute* for them, shall thus meet the demands of the Law of Justice, or, possibly, appease an Avenging Deity. To make the satisfaction of justice or of vengeance more complete, the body of the sinner is, or was supposed to be consigned to a 'fire-and-brimstone hell for ever,' although this consummation of torment has not been borne for them in their theory of punishment.

Persons who naturally take a penal view of the Infinite Self-sacrifice in the Christian religion can never apprehend the moral impossibility of Sin-suffering in perfect Innocency, or the injustice of Justice accepting a Substitute-person against whom the penal Law is not directed; nor can they perceive that if the Law were directed against themselves, as sinners it might, and probably would, leave their rebellious will, the root of all Sin, uneradicated. Is not this the testimony of all personal, all human experience with regard to the radical inefficacy of punishment?

2. Another class of very ordinary unimaginative human beings, of a commercial character and business turn of mind, would make a bargain of exchange or of loss and gain, keeping a debtor and creditor account; they will do something for something in return—“good works” for reward; not done as the spontaneous outcome of an absorbing passion, but to procure a fair equivalent. That is *their* religion. In view of death these people say of themselves, and of others like them, that they go from ‘works to rewards.’

The earliest recorded commercial compact ever proposed by man to God, was a purely Jewish conception, and the terms were these:—‘Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my Father’s house in peace; *then* shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house; and of all that *Thou* shalt give me, I will surely *give* the tenth unto Thee.’

3. There is yet a third class of persons—how many or how few?—who know nothing of fear and consequent torment in their religion, and, certainly, who would scorn to reduce their life, with all their conscious capacities, to the terms of a commercial transaction.

*They* see that Love everywhere rules; in themselves,

and in all their relations with others ; whereas Fear only paralyses for a while ; in friendship, in the highest friendship, marriage, in all family relationships, in their dealings with all mankind, and who they thus naturally regard as brothers and sisters. These people readily translate this Omnipotent Love into Omnipotence in a Personal Being, and feel, therefore, the only conceivable Religion to be the natural bond of a child to a parent—a Father, giving that name its full natural influence upon their heart, and responding with filial trust and confidence. Not, indeed, is He present to their bodily vision ; and as having other omnipotent attributes in sustaining and ordering this world and the universe, He would seem to be an abstract Deity, and is, apparently, removed at an infinite distance from His human family. But, to dispel any misgivings as to His real relationship to mankind, who might hardly have guessed the simple truth from the conceptions of sense-science, and to satisfy any physical doubt of His perpetual presence with them, He would, of course, give a visible pledge of His Love, and in the person of One Who, with relation to Himself, would express the *union* of His Sonship in Humanity. Thus, speaking to the conscience and to the heart of mankind, that assurance of their own relationship, individually, would be given to all alike, and be intelligible to all nationalities, as being equally included in His Humanity.

His whole life bearing the expression of an Infinite Love for the bodies and souls alike of the human race, He thus gave the greatly needed personal manifestation of a Father's care for His children, and breathing almost the language of the purest human passion, He speaks quite intelligibly to them all. 'Abide in Me, and I in you,' expressing the soul of His life, simply translates the highest and happiest feeling of the human heart—'The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for Mine,' into the abiding union of two beings pledged to each other.

How could this Master of the heart of mankind fail to fully convey the message of His Father's own unseen yet abiding union with them—as witnessed *in* Himself—and of His boundless love for them, but which, even with the very impersonation before their eyes, passeth all understanding—now !

In coming forth from God, as the impersonation of His Love, and as also the manifestation of the purest passion, which is ever-vibrating in Humanity, this human aspect of His Being takes various forms, without ever losing its unity. He is the true *source* of wedded love, and of human offspring ; of all the charities of father, mother, son, and daughter, brother, and sister ; extending the latter relationships to an universal brotherhood and sisterhood, and thus imparting a far higher conception of friendship than the tie of mutual self-interest. He is the loving Head



of every family ; in Him is the sympathetic bond of all human relationships ; and as the universal type of perfection in human character, in Him shine all the virtues and graces of true manhood and womanhood ; deeper than all, in the history of man's being, He is the immediate source of his life (as will appear in the course of this essay) ; He is the Lord of Humanity.

In virtue of His oneness with God, and inseparable union with Humanity, He is ever present with, and in connexion with, every man and woman and child ; communion with Him, as with another self, is physically natural and easy, and through Him, with the Father of both, making prayer possible ; interpreting that Father's will to His children, and imparting all His own thoughts and feelings ; knowing all our own, and entering into all our joys and sorrows. Ever-present, under all the accidents of place, time, occupation, or other circumstances of human life. Present in the city, or in the gaudy show at sunny noon ; present in the lonely valley, with setting sun and rising moon. Nature ever mirrors His presence ; the Human aspect of His Being, ' Through Whom all things were made,' enabling man to hold an inborn, sympathetic converse with the natural world ; with every ' herb, tree, fruit, flower, glistening with dew ;' and woe unto that man whose heart loses this inexpressible responsiveness. Especially is He present in the solitude of sorrow, in suffering, and in death,



as the source whence flows the living water of our being, which else dries up.

But Love's religion comprises far more than his clear apprehension of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man—as alike revealed or disclosed in the person of One Who bears to Him the relation of His Sonship in Humanity ; in regard to the nature of this compound Personality, love's faith contrasts yet further with the outcome of fear.

To make Fear's conception of the punishment of Innocence complete and satisfactory, the substitute Person must, it would seem, have been previously quite unconnected with the human race ; He must have ' come down ' from an infinite distance to take flesh—to be ' made man ; ' constituting a new kind of man to undergo the penal suffering for the race whom He thus only represents ; and in the person of a man who is not necessarily inclusive of all mankind. Clearly, also, the former race He came to represent must be an utter failure in the hands of the Creator—irredeemable.

In taking a *penal* view of a perfectly Innocent Being, as a demand on our faith, this made-man interpretation of His Human personality, imposes the most enormous demands on our credulity ; not only with regard to the moral impossibility of sin-suffering in innocency, and as a substitution in law for the punishment of man's sin ; but further, that this vicarious suffering having been undergone in the

person of One Who, before He took flesh, had no connexion with man, His *conjoined* human personality would together have made Him a *substitute-man*. Expiatory suffering in a Being who was Himself incapable of feeling it, which, if conceivable, would have been an extraordinary miscarriage of justice, and which, in the substitute-nature of the sufferer, would have been an utterly abortive miscarriage on behalf of any *human* being.

In the Lord of Humanity, Whose life having brought the assurance of God's Fatherhood to mankind, was thus also the demonstration of His own oneness with God, Mankind at once recognise a purely Innocent Being, but, Who, as the Righteous and Living root of Humanity, became Incarnate; then the substitution of a (newly) conjoined human personality vanishes—in His identical oneness with man, and His inclusiveness also appears—in His actual impersonation of Mankind as an organic whole.

Then, moreover, a yet further bright realisation is experienced by the Race he visited as 'His own.' For Him, Who in the Human aspect of His Being is the Head and Owner of the Race, to have undergone the naturally inevitable—not to Him penal—consequences of His Incarnation, in bearing the sufferings and the death of Mankind, solely for their sake, as the only conceivable reason for the self-sacrifice and humiliation of His pre-existent Being, would in-

deed manifest an amazing love for them, but His material embodiment is quite intelligible as a physical fact ; and that He thus gave Himself in order to deliver man from the felt power of a mortal enemy—in a life of bondage, and in the fear of death, is one achievement, which He—the Righteousness and the Life of Humanity—in His Life and in His Death, as MAN, has wrought for Mankind. But then, in the voluntary sacrifice of Himself, as Man's Deliverer, obediently to the *will* of the Father, His Humanity involved the entire surrender of the Human *will*, 'His obedience (in life) even unto death ;' carrying with it, therefore, Deliverance from the stronghold of Evil, in the *will*, and the moral 'Redemption' or restoration of mankind by their life-long obedience in Him ; thence also the 'Atonement,' or moral equivalent, for all their sin of disobedience, and their reunion with the Father. 'By the which will (surrender *in* Him) we are sanctified.'

No amount of Legal punishment in the person of the sinless Redeemer could possibly have accomplished the Sanctification of any one human being ; and this having been attained by his obedience *in* Him would render penal justice against any man *then*, not only morally unjustifiable towards him, but also an utter misdirection of justice itself. Man, in Christ, is no longer under the Law.

But no tongue can tell, nor pen describe, the agony He must have endured in the closest possible contact

of perfect purity with impurity, in all the thoughts and actions of human experience, in every secret form of temptation He underwent within, and from without, and from all of which the virgin righteousness of His soul must have shrank with an abhorrence that *we* cannot realise, during the whole of His life-and-death struggle for the victory of Good over Evil ; agony of soul in the purely sinless, by intimate connexion with a sinful Incarnation, not by the impossible experience of sin-suffering in the sinless, and which was intensified by His ever-compassionate sorrow for the Race bearing His Human nature, for whom He fought the battle, and whose very destiny was at stake.

This deliverance of the utterly helpless from the hands of an over-powering Tyrant, who had taken possession of them, in their life and in their death—not their rescue from the hands of the Father by paying a penalty to Him, and, further, the re-instatement of the lost, both being seen in the Self-sacrifice of the Deliverer and Redeemer, with the untold soul-suffering He underwent for their sake, and all alike coming home to the soul of man as a personal truth—is that conception of Him which love embraces. Sin-suffering in the Redeemer would efface the majestic beauty of the silent soul-sufferer in love and sorrowing compassion for Mankind, whose heart leaps up to Him as their ideal of the One alone in Whom they see the Self-sacrificing champion of all their cruel wrongs and

the sharer of all their misery. He is their *Ecce Homo* ! But behold the Man Who, as the *sinless* sin-sufferer, sacrificed Himself to punishment, wholly undeserved, and as such futile in law, and which He was Himself wholly incapable of feeling ; in that light viewing Him, He would have made no conceivable sacrifice at all, nor would the misdirection of justice by a penal substitute in Him satisfy the judicial intellect of mankind for whom the punishment was borne. The bewildering thought of sin-suffering innocence equally shocks the conscience, and sickens the heart of mankind. No faculty of the human—a reflection of the Divine—can contemplate the ‘ Infinite Self-sacrifice,’ in a penal light, with any responsiveness, as a soul-satisfying reality ; nor can faith accept the incredible doctrine as to the personality of the Self-sacrificer, that He was a Being, Who, having been ‘ made man,’ would be a substitute kind of man ; and yet, as a further and utter misdirection of justice, He underwent the punishment for man’s sin !

But in the righteous Lord of Humanity, become Incarnate, mankind can see *their* Self-sacrificing Deliverer, and their Redeemer, in the battle that is ever raging within them, between Good and Evil ; and that He is ever-present with us, in us, confronting the foe, still in the thick of the fight, in our life and in our death, giving us the victory and our redemption also, for in Him we are more than conquerors. Is not His

abiding presence with His Own another and a nearer view of Him which touches the human heart? The most lonely life is really not alone at any moment; and the most forsaken and desolate man or woman, bereft of all others, and of all else, can ever feel the real presence of One, with Whom life is brighter and more hopeful than in the untaught innocence of childhood.

The Religion of Love, and *versus* Fear, is a very simple and natural outcome.

The great discovery of an Omnipotent Love for mankind being assured in the Person of Humanity, the dominant passion of love in the human heart is ever seeking to find a person to whom it can look with trust and confidence. This feeling of faith ever finds expression, progressively expanding, in friendship, and in every form of relationship, attaining to its very highest experience in wedded life with regard to any human being; and at last centres in the Omnipotent Love, translating that into a Personal God and Father. *Then*, the human passion has in Him its fullest realisation, simply because it has found a Being of kindred nature, and in whom it can repose the fullest trust and confidence—complete faith. This *felt bond* of union with such a God is Religion, fulfilling the very highest and happiest capacity of man's moral being—a fulfilment of which fear would completely deprive the possessor. The only loss of this religion is when some sort of fear temporarily dis-

possesses the indwelling sense of union with the unseen Person; for the two passions—trustful love and mistrustful fear—are utterly incompatible and irreconcilable in any human heart.

As the three types of human character—Fear, Commercial loss and gain, and pure trustful Love—are the diverse movements of the Human Heart in Religion, there are only two forms of Intellect in Theology.

1. The barren intellect which, abandoning its prerogative of free inquiry, sees in the highest truth only that which '*ought* to be because it *is*,' thence accepts a creed which demands the unconditional surrender of 'private judgment' as the condition of Church membership in every human being, with all his, or her, splendid powers of intellect and heart prostrate at the feet of an ever-chequered tradition, and bound in the hands of a priesthood; involving the soul of man in the meshes of an elaborate and inexplicable mysticism—a dry Faith, relieved only by an exciting, sensuous materialism. This Faith has proved to be the last refuge of a perplexed, paralysed, and despairing intellect. 'I can believe it if I know for certain that I *ought* to believe it; but if I am not bound to believe it, I can not believe it.' Bound! by what authority? Inspiration?—yes. But creeds are products of Reason, as the interpreter. Inspired teaching may be in part above reason, but it is never inconsistent with reason. While, therefore, reason



may not be able to discover the truth, it is able to detect error when it takes the form of logical inconsistencies and contradictions in the dogmatic formulæ promulgated by fathers and councils. Enlightened by the ever-active intellectual inquiry which now-a-days prevails, no kind of sensuous ritual, however outwardly attractive, can beguile reason from exercising her rightful power—beyond the age of boyhood or girlhood. Any one having an intimate acquaintance with the religious world knows that the blandishments of Delilah in the Temple do not enable her to crop the locks of Samson.

But again: the 'ought to be because it is' will equally satisfy the soul of a selfish commercial class of people, each of whom, making the best bargain he can for himself in business, has thus succeeded in settling the business account of his soul without further inquiry.

2. The intellect, which moves indeed, but only with the heart in Faith, reverses this order of logic: seeing 'the *is*, because it *ought* to be;' to fulfil the otherwise unfathomable consciousness of love, and thence of trust, in the heart of man, to which the other magnificent power of his intellect responds, aye; you *feel* the way, I can *interpret* everything in your light and leading; to this guidance the will, now released from the prejudice of evil inclination, assents, while conscience, from the inner-



most man, or woman, whispers, yes; you have, indeed, at last, discovered the secret of your existence, and of your destiny. Thus equipped, you can defy the power of Evil; for, if there be an Infinite Sin, there is also an Infinite Love—ever delivering, redeeming, forgiving, and reclaiming the wanderer; ever guiding and comforting you through all the difficulties and perils of this groping night-life, you will fear no evil; in loneliness, giving an unseen hand whenever you are beginning to sink; you will, finally, invade the realms of Death, and Hades, and enter your eternal home.

The home that fear would reach is freedom from torment—a Father's everlasting punishment. Yet, every now and then such an one feels some assurance that dread should not be, is not, the central moving power of his own being; nor an intuition, therefore, from Him whence came his life. Whereupon he intuitively suspects that an Enemy has told him the most blasphemous double lie, in having led him to believe that God has belied Himself in the (loving) consciousness of His creature, and that He has also played false to him, in the witness He has thus given of Himself, in him. For, whenever the betrayed *can* see through the gloom and despair of the present, and catches only a glimpse of his felt true destiny, the babe of love, begotten of the Father in the very womb of his soul, leaps for joy.

Fear and Love thus struggling together for the mastery, in any man's consciousness, will surely end in the victory of the gentle sister. And, if 'perfect love casteth out fear because fear hath torment,' ought the apprehension of future punishment to be a moving power in religion, as the voice of God in the soul of man? His teaching, in expressing for *us* our all-comprehensive petition, bids us pray Him to 'deliver us from Evil,' or 'the Evil one,' not to save us from the punishment for our trespasses; knowing, as He does, that 'we have not received the spirit of adoption again to fear.'

The Infinite Holiness, or Righteousness of God, and thence the conception of Him as an Omnipotent Legislator, and whose inflexible laws, if once broken, wholly or singly, must, with inexorable Justice, demand unknown and inconceivable punishment, is that aspect of an intellectual theology which is quite true as *part* of the whole truth. But this faith will also plunge the human mind into the abyss of despair, reaching the same destination as the fearful heart, until the vision of an Infinite Love illumines the soul with a new and true interpretation of Righteousness. That, as the full expression and movement of righteousness in man, is love, and 'this is the fulfilling of the law' (of righteousness), so, therefore, in God, the law-giver, His righteousness, moves only in *connexion* with infinite love. 'Be ye,

therefore, merciful,' for this expresses My righteousness in you ; 'even as *your* Father Himself is merciful,' and will judge you accordingly, even in the righteousness of mercy.

Perhaps the reader will recognise in these various forms of Religion and Theology the features of the Catholic Church—Roman and broad Anglican, and the sisters of the latter—High, Ritualistic, Low, Evangelical, and Nonconformity, as sketched by a layman. It is certainly not his intention to even attempt to fill in the details of their various expressions of doctrine. What a heart-felt yearning after truth in the soul do their portraitures alike present to one who is familiar with all their faces—beautiful even in tears of sadness, and longing to be united !

To *discover* Truth in religion and in Theology, the course of investigation lies within our own consciousness—as including conscience, which must ever be responsive in order to carry conviction. That is the design of this essay.

The young will best feel the truth thus found within themselves ; the old will best know it ; the unlearned will best understand it ; and the learned will find no other answer to their doubts, nor rest to their inquiries.

Having been engaged for many years in dry intellectual labour, it has been a crowning satisfaction to discover another field for such work, in

the intervals of professional life, and the cultivation of which is ever relieved by that play of the heart which never grows weary in most of us. The highest truth must be felt out, as well as followed by reason. That is the twofold prerogative of any man or woman. But if some apology for my authorship on the subject of this essay be necessary, it would be, that perhaps—from opportunities which no other professional life can offer—I have gathered some special experience of human nature, as to its vast, unknown capacities for suffering, and for happiness, in the *same* person; and thus I have been led to explore further that greatest of all mysteries to every man—himself.

## CHAPTER I.

MAN, AN EVOLUTIONARY BEING, WITH EVER-  
VARYING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES.

FOR some years the psychological study of man's nature has arrested my attention the more I have grown older in the knowledge of the diseases to which his bodily organism is subject. The principal and most pregnant conclusion at which I have arrived is this: that no man knows how much there is of Good, naturally, in every man until he tries to find it out. I am, therefore, an optimist, not a pessimist, in my belief of man's original capacity for moral, no less than for his intellectual evolution.

This belief in the inherent Goodness of Humanity leads to the conception of an universal brotherhood and a family of mankind, albeit yet without a father. But a further study of psychology shows also how men must necessarily differ from each other in thought and feeling upon almost every subject of their common consciousness. That, as the material organization of man is moulded and differentiated by the physical conditions of life—with regard to climate, food, occupation, marriage, &c., co-operating with an individual temperament; so also, in relation

to his intellectual and moral character; the external conditions of luxury or poverty, from childhood; the association with parents, brothers and sisters, schoolfellows; the intellectual and moral atmosphere of his country and his age; the potent influence of education, and the operation of hereditary descent in all the thoughts and feelings and habits of his instructors, or which have come down from their ancestors; and the hereditary influence of the man's own ancestors; all this environment and inborn predisposition must be productive of the utmost differentiation in all that each man knows or believes—in all his thoughts, opinions, and feelings. His individualism is the product of all the impressions from innumerable influences which have been poured into him, and, as transmitted through his bodily organism, itself affected by analogous relations—in the course of his life; and *they*, in their combination, have made him what he is—*i.e.*, as he is *constituted*. Hence, we find the widest diversity of opinion and views, as with regard to theology, religion, politics, &c.

But does not this large-minded and large-hearted apprehension of our differences justify the utmost tolerance of all such diversity in human nature; a tolerance which becomes the handmaid of goodness?

As man thus differs individually, so do the same forces produce different degrees of intellectual and moral evolution in mankind—regarded as an organic

whole, in successive periods of the world's history. In theology, the doctrines of one age become dry and barren dogmas in the next; the creed of one era becomes more or less unintelligible to a subsequent generation.

In the course of all this ever-progressive change which man's being undergoes individually and collectively, it therefore becomes necessary, from time to time, to review and revise the past aspects of Humanity with relation to its theology, from the new standpoint of the present. Modern thought and feeling—the product of all the agencies to which man is subject—must here differ very much from that which prevailed in earlier periods of the history of the human race.

But if theological doctrine and creed—which express merely *formulated* conceptions in the human mind, in its perpetual strivings after truth—should progressively take forms which shall have more and more of a living hold upon the moral intellect—the conscience—and be more in touch with the heart of mankind, the ever unchanging Goodness in Humanity should, and will, ultimately, find expression in a common Faith, which, in its simplicity and its breadth, would reconcile all our unavoidable individual differences—hushed in the stillness of a mightier Charity ‘that never faileth.’

Surely, this ideal of human perfection, in the ful



maturity of man's moral nature, with all the highest enjoyments of his life of which it would be self-productive, is confronted by a vision of Evil, and thence of suffering, sorrow, and death ; which, with our deliverance from its power, and our recreation in the person of our Deliverer, constitute the most wonderful episode in the history of mankind.

Few there are, however, who do not know, and certainly they who are behind the scenes of human life know full well, that there should be this *necessity* in the natural history of man, is one of the 'burning questions' of the day.

But yet deeper difficulties and doubts prevail. 'Is there a God?' 'No,' says the Atheist: 'I don't know,' says the Agnostic. 'But if there be a God, is He only an abstract Deity?' 'Yes,' says the Deist.

What is man? Has he only a sense-mental existence; no more than that of a dog lying at his feet?' If this be truth, these two existences may have no relation whatever to each other. Certainly not that of two persons, a personal God and a personal man, between whom there might then be the relationship of Father and child—sameness of nature, essentially, with a parental or a filial love common to both; a bond of union *this* between the two; the One, therefore, ever showing His provident care for everything affecting the well-being of His offspring, the other ever feeling trust and confidence in



Him, and acting with a reverential and willing obedience to His will, the bond of man's natural religion binding his allegiance: not the yoke of a slave to a tyrant, who, carrying the whip-hand over him, will punish him with persistent cruelty, and having scourged him often for his misdoings during a pitiful span of servitude, may, in a capricious moment, destroy him; or, in justice to Himself, will almost certainly torture him for ever. All these to many minds now are also 'burning questions,' and for which the answers are to be found, not in *themselves*, but in the science of the material world.

What confusion of thought and what distress are experienced by thousands of persons who have fallen into the abyss of darkness which *some* so-called scientific works offer for the enlightenment of this generation cannot be told better than in the language of the following letter from a young lady-patient endowed with more than average intellectual capacity, and the pathos of whose thralldom speaks for itself:—

'*April 30th, 1888.*—I hope you will not feel bored by my writing to you again so soon. May I take a little opium when the pains are very bad, and, if so, in what form? I am afraid I have disobeyed your orders somewhat, and studied just a little too deeply. The latest subjects have been geology, evolution, antiquity of man, &c., upon which points I was lamentably ignorant. I knew the scriptural account of the Creation could not be literally true; but my new book, *Laing's Modern Science and Modern Thought*,

sets aside almost everything in religion as false, and yet the author evidently gets his ideas from the highest scientific authorities. My faith, which was weak before, is now shaken to its very foundation. I shut up my difficulties in my own heart lest I should instil doubts into the minds of others, brooding over them in secret; and I am quite sure you will understand that this intensity of thought makes me feel weak and ill. Do tell me whether *you* really have found it possible to reconcile the stern facts of geology and evolution with the Bible? It would be unspeakably sad to lose sight of One Who sympathises with human sorrow.'

In an age of perplexity and free inquiry difficulties and doubts do not end here.

When the wanderer in search of Truth hears everywhere whispered the same question, 'Is life worth living?' he is led to consider his own life from various points of view with no very satisfying result; and then, probably, his inquiry becomes expanded into 'what is he, and whence he came, and whither is he going'? In seeking for the solution of a prevailing perplexity and a refuge from despair, he begins to feel, if not confess, at least, one conviction—that the teaching of his childhood has failed to tell him more than the 'old story' of the 'Word of Life,' and 'His precious Death.' But, as a rule, he goes no further. Whenever asked the *meaning*, to him, of these marvellous expressions, he repeats the story. Every now and then he makes abortive attempts to grope out of his darkness, followed only by a blacker darkness

than before. At length, perhaps, he gives the matter up, and falls into a state of chronic confusion of thought and blankness, unknown possibly to his most intimate associates. His creed is now, 'What is truth?' Such persons are to be seen in society everywhere, whose features in advancing years—not having the lines of intellectual wear and tear; nor bearing the aspect of corroding anxiety and care; nor wearing the appearance of *ennui* and desolation which marks the used-up pleasure-seeker; nor portraying simply the natural sadness of bereavement—their facial expression betokens a 'settled, ceaseless gloom, that will not look beyond the tomb, but cannot hope for rest before.' Perchance, when the intellect has grown weary and dull upon the one subject, although bright enough with relation to all other inquiries, another part of the man, what may be called his spiritual nature, begins to move under the influence of declining bodily health, loss of relatives and friends, domestic sorrow, worldly disappointment, and a general sense of isolation, which brings him face to face with himself. Then, in some sad hour, the question returns, but in an entirely new light, as emancipated from all the accidents of time. 'Is life in *itself* worth living? and yet in passing into the unknown, could death be *gain*?'

This is no uncommon self-investigation, for, if not the issue of perplexity and a despairing faith, it is that

to which an apostle was driven by bitter experiences, which, in some way or other, and sooner or later, are the lot of every human being whose life is of average duration.

But as trouble with loneliness breaks the heart, it also wonderfully quickens the spirit; and thus, under these circumstances of doubt and despondency, there is felt to be a Yes, rather than a No, to this inquiry respecting the present and the future. Possibly, at last, the inquirer begins to discern that, after all, there may be, even to him, some *personal connexion* with, and *inclusion* in, *both* the 'Life' and the 'Death,' but which the story taught him in former years has not brought home to his conscience and to his heart.

If the discovery of any such latent vital truth implied a deep knowledge of scholastic theology, the author of these lines could hardly pretend to throw a ray of light upon the abstruse polemics—perhaps the mysticism—in which the student would soon be involved. But if traditional knowledge and cast of thought would rather unfit him for the search, and if by an analysis of Human Consciousness, coupled with the light of Conscience, the truth can be evolved, any man may claim the right to exercise his own introspective sense for the purpose of making such discovery. And has Science not a word to say on behalf of man's highest concerns? An investigation of this

kind cannot be said to lie beyond the range of Medicine, which, having for its object the whole study of man, the psychological and moral aspects of his being are only the continuation and completion of that study.

A few years since, the author was first awakened to the knowledge of his birthright as a layman to the free discussion of theology and religion, from what he knew of *himself*, by a chance perusal of the *Theological Essays* written by the late Frederick Denison Maurice, Professor of Casuistry and Moral Philosophy in the University of Cambridge. He was a man far in advance of the age in which he lived.

The following pages are the humble attempt of a disciple to follow the footsteps of his Master, in, at least, ever maintaining, as he does, that 'a theology which does not correspond to the deepest thoughts and feelings of human beings cannot be a true theology.'

Some will say, 'We find our all in "Revelation."' Yes; but you will soon find yourselves drifting away from that anchor of your faith and sure hope, unless you can clearly recognise in the person of your Instructor One of your own nature, Who sympathises with all your sufferings and sorrow, Who speaks, and very intelligibly, to your consciousness and to your conscience, and Who fully enters into all your thoughts and feelings, some of which you would never have confessed even to your best and most intimate friend,

and some which you hardly suspected were the true mainspring of your life. Here is a Man Who tells me all of myself that ever I knew or knew not. Is not He the source of all human consciousness, and the Lord of my life? Such is the *internal* evidence which commands my trust, my confidence, my faith, and which bids me forsake all other teaching and follow Him.

Trust and confidence begotten of *experience* is also one of the strongest ties which can bind the human heart. Thus, any one may say: 'I am actively and incessantly engaged in my business, or my professional avocation, for a livelihood; I have neither time nor strength, if I have the ability, to study the Christian theology further than to know that I can put my full trust in the person who commands my faith.' Confidence in Him must be the only surety for accepting His doctrine, which is possible to thousands of human beings in this hard-working and suffering world. Well, then, study the 'Life,' that in its *felt* truth, and fascinating beauty, will lay hold of your whole being, and dominate your life, in a way that no other life-story ever has taken possession of you; and this experience—this consciousness—will be, in fact, your faith. Other persons can go much further. While fully acknowledging the living force of that faith, they yet need, or desire, a logical basis for their belief.

As a psychological study, *you* will appreciate the

terseness and brevity of what the author has to say, although covering a wide range of self-investigation ; for no argumentative disquisition could demonstrate that which an appeal to the inner man does not enable him to realise.

Personal consciousness, honestly interrogated, will enable you to discover written in yourself the secret of your existence, and an answer to the question—‘What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?’

The outcome of your self-investigation will be this:—That you belong to a Being, Who, like yourself, has the personal and moral attributes of Love and Righteousness. He knows, as you may be conscious, that you have fallen into the hands of a mortal Enemy, and that you are engaged in an unequal, indeed, a hopeless, struggle. That this Being, Who claims you as His own, is found to have full Expression in a Person of perfect Love and perfect Righteousness, but a Person who is also intimately *connected* with *Humanity*, as One with MAN, thereby answering the deepest aspirations of mankind to know if an otherwise abstract Deity—a Creator, ‘uncreate, incomprehensible, and eternal’—could, indeed, be to *them* a Personal and Loving Creator—a Father, caring for His human family; while in the Human Impersonation of Love and Righteousness man hails his Deliverer from the felt power of Evil over him; a response to his signals of distress, in



mind, in soul, and body, and thus meeting his direst needs.

How He discovers Himself to us; how He delivers us from the power of Evil, involving, as that deliverance does, the very sacrifice of Himself even unto death; and how then restores us *in* Himself to the Father of the human family, will follow.

The vision of an Infinitely Loving and Righteous Being, having full Expression in a like Person, Humanised, for Man's deliverance from Evil, and Who, now that He has withdrawn Himself from this world of sense, is still ever present to Befriend us in every way, presents a threefold manifestation of One and the Same Being, three portions of One Name, which is quite consistent and intelligible; in contrast with the unthinkable notion of an 'uncreate, incomprehensible, and eternal Being,' in 'Three Persons,' yet an undivided 'One,' and whose abstract nature supplies no want of which we are conscious.

The *full* manifestation to every man's individual consciousness of what he is, and what he should be, will be an act of *final* (self) Judgment, and from the verdict there can be no escape.

And then, equally clearly conscious will each man be that he is enjoying the healthy activity of his highest powers, and of their fullest expansion in the perfection of his being; or vividly conscious that deliverance from the power of Evil has not been accomplished in him.



But, to the one, this ultimate state of personal perfection would be impossible ; and, by the other, the sense of self-thralldom could not be fully realised, unless the *whole* man were there, in soul and body. And the Deliverer's victory over Evil would not be triumphant or complete if measured only by the short tenure of man's physical life, and if the death of his body were final. Thence, our concluding investigation will be physiological and psychological—how that in physical death the personal identity of man survives, and, at last, with the restoration of a body suitable to new conditions of life for the completion of the individual ; each human being knowing himself, or herself, even as he or she is known in the Conqueror's full Redemption of mankind from the power of physical death ; and meanwhile resting in the 'sure and certain hope' of reunion in His Life with the Father of all.

## CHAPTER II.

THE CONCEPTION OF GOD ARISING IN HUMAN  
CONSCIOUSNESS.

IN the priority of causation there must be a First Cause.

In relation to the material world—animate and inanimate—man knows himself to be the highest power ; in his will having control over all other living beings, from the ruling of an elephant to the felling of an oak, and in subjecting also to his will all the forces of inanimate matter ; not, indeed, by over-ruling these forces, but by making them as passive agents subservient to his wants, *e.g.*, the expansive force of heat and the lightning flash of electricity being utilised by him in the steam-engine and the telegraph, &c.

Man is thus evidently the lord of Nature ; obviously not by virtue of his conjoined animal organism at whatever period in this world's history man was produced. The inference is reasonable, that the *Supreme Power* of all, over that of man, bears some resemblance to him ; *i.e.*, as a Personal Being, having an Intellectual and a Moral nature, with a Self-determining Will. The abstract idea of a First Cause, or a Supreme Power only, thus necessarily becomes invested with these

attributes of man's own consciousness in regard to himself, constituting a Personal Being, whose existence and attributes are commonly expressed by the name—God.

If the human conception of God is carried on, His Being is spoken of as Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent. But these terms are an expansion of the human—with regard to power, knowledge, and relation to space, heightened to Infinity—as the all-mighty, the all-knowing, and the every-where present at the same time. Carrying the conception to other attributes, and speaking of God as 'Uncreate, Eternal, and Incomprehensible,' the finite human mind contemplates a Being who is altogether beyond finite conception; the mind is lost in *words* which have no corresponding human ideas. Nor could the totality of these attributes define the humanly undefinable, or express any knowledge of the unknowable and un-thinkable. Indeed, imagination may well conceive that there are higher forms of intelligence to the human in the realms of space, and that they are endowed with faculties which may comprehend attributes of Deity that are necessarily quite unknown, and would be quite unintelligible to the faculties of the human mind, and which, being inconceivable, that mind would have no language to express.

But it is rational to believe that God's nature does so far correspond to the human; that Deity

must possess the attributes which Humanity—the created—can only have derived originally from the Creator, as a personal, moral, intellectual, and self-determining Being. And *this* conception brings Him to our consciousness.

The personality of God—as thus realised—is fully confirmed by the *analogy* which subsists between the works of ‘Nature,’ as they might be vaguely designated, and the works of human art; the one bearing evidence of that positive ‘adaptation of means to ends,’ which are quite beyond the experience of accidental concurrences, and which clearly indicate the operation of a designing intelligence and a will-power, such as man knows that he, as an intelligent and a self-determining being, has exercised in producing the works of his own hands. It would be as contrary to experience to suppose that a quantity of loose letters, in the form of metallic type, shaken together in a box, would fall accidentally into words, expressing the play of Hamlet, without a compositor to put them in such order, as to imagine that any chance concurrence of physical forces could have constructed the eye, the most perfect optical instrument, without the will-predetermination of a designing intelligence—a Personal Being directing them.

The intermediate ‘forces and laws of matter,’ as ‘secondary causes,’ must ultimately be referable to Him, of Whose Mind they are only the modes of

operating ; just as the tools in the hands of a carpenter are only the means by which he works.

But the human mind, contemplating the inimitable perfection and illimitable vastness of the works in nature, as compared with its own productions of inventive art, has its conceptions of intelligence and will-power heightened to Infinity and Omnipotence, and thus discerns the existence of a Supreme Personal Being as the God of Whom physical forces and laws are the expressions of his will-power and modes of action—fixed and universal in the phenomena of the material world ; extending this conception to living and organized beings, evolutionary development, with progressive activities, bespeak predetermined potentialities, and hence involved *purposes* ; attaining to consciousness, and ultimately to a conscious, personal being—man, having similar endowments to the attributes of his Creator : the whole constituting an Infinite and Omnipotent scheme or design of Creation, which has been evolved progressively, without any interruption by any after-determination, and the consummation of which, as the original Design, is quite unknown to finite intelligence, and cannot be even guessed.

In like manner the *analogous* history of the Moral World—with regard to man individually and nationally—exhibits, but less clearly, the retribution of Evil and the supremacy of Good ; thereby proclaiming

the Moral nature of God and His Righteousness ; just as by the punishment of vice and the maintenance of virtue in the relations between man and man, mankind, as moral beings, deal with each other.

God's Providence also is attested by the reasoning from analogy ; from what man does, in not neglecting to superintend and control all that has been confided to his ministry ; from the care he takes of all animal life dependent on his support, and the provident care especially of a father for his family. It thus appears impossible to conceive that God having created the world, animate and inanimate, has ever since stood outside His works ; that the laws of Nature, being so many expressions of His will, He Himself is bound for ever fast by them. He not ruling His own laws, but they ruling Him ; so that He cannot, or will not, interfere with their operation at any time, as part of His *preconceived* Design ; and that man, with all his felt needs, is not cared for by the Being Who *made him*, and Who fully *knows* his needs.

God is Love, in His essential relation to man, judging from the dominion of this one passion in human nature. For Love is the motive power which rules every man, and by the influence of which he can alone govern all others ; Fear only paralysing Evil for a time, whilst Love overcomes Evil with Good. Love is also the expression of ideal human perfection—individually and socially—as an universal brother-

hood. Thus, taken as the type of man's moral nature, he who is a dry, hard, cold-hearted man, may be the very impersonation of rigid justice and rectitude, and is yet a very unattractive character ; whereas even a great criminal is felt to be more truly human, and one of ourselves, than an utterly selfish and unsympathetic man. Thence, the bond of Love is the witness of a Comprehensive Religion, merging all sectarian distinctions in the unity begotten of a loving spirit, which 'beareth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things, thinketh no evil,' as members one of another. Without this in-dwelling source of moral life in man or woman, the individual may be truly accounted *dead*, whatever other virtues he or she may possess.

Whence comes this consciousness of Moral Love and of its power in man ; his feeling also that it expresses the perfection of his being ; if this attribute be not the manifestation of the Creator in his nature ? But if He—the Creator of man—is Love, His acts *must* spring from it, as ours *should*. Love will be the key to unlock the secrets of Divinity, as well as of Humanity.

This will presently appear, in that Love rescues man from the dominion of Evil—the mortal enemy—who had otherwise taken possession of him, but from whose slavery he is redeemed in the person of Love as his Deliverer.



MAN—A *Righteous Personality*—Fallen into the *Power* of a *Mortal Enemy*: His *discovery* of a *Deliverer* and *Redeemer*.

These truths are evolved from a further analysis of human consciousness.

(1.) Every man is conscious of a righteousness *inherent* in himself, and which is even *mightier* than Evil; with which, however, he feels himself to be in close personal relationship, until it may have become inseparable from, yet is never identical with, himself. If man were merely the battle-ground of two antagonistic and ever-contending forces, called good and evil, their co-existence and conflict might be only the natural and normal moral constitution of man. But his innate love of righteousness, and which is ever striving for supremacy—no man ever saying within himself, 'Evil, be thou my good'—proclaims that in his essential and true nature *he is a righteous being*. But for this root stock of righteousness in every man, his personal sinfulness, reinforced by hereditary predisposition to evil, would long since have made him *wholly* a sinner, and man would have become irredeemable; instead of his being conscious of a sinfulness which is not truly himself, and from which he also feels that he can be emancipated.

(2.) Man's *voluntary* connexion with evil constitutes *sin*. 'I did this act, I thought that thought, I conceived that desire; it was a *wrong* act, it was a



*wrong* thought, it was an *evil* desire, and it was *mine*.' But the evil which was thus originally *extrinsic* to man's personality, and which gives *pain* in its attachment to him, must have been introduced by a Mortal Enemy, and who has taken possession of him by the capture of his *will*, subjugating him to the vilest slavery in the service of that enemy.

This slave-man of evil inclination shall not do the things that he himself loves and would desire to do ; and he shall do the things that he himself would not have done, and may even hate to do—thus bringing man's righteous personality into complete subjection, until he has become the docile, and even the willing, wearer of the chains.

The all-prevailing form of evil in man is *self-love*, the perversion of his highest moral endowment—love, in the wrong direction ; which, by incapacitating the slave to self for the love of any other human being, breaks up the brotherhood of mankind, and estranges the selfish altogether from his capacity for enjoyment in the love of God—as signifying not only the impersonation of all consciousness, but a Being having the relationship of Father—giving that name the full play of its natural meaning to the human heart. Selfishness takes a multitude of *forms*, which are more or less apparent : pride, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness ; avarice, covetousness, thefts, and gambling ; hypocrisy, lying, deceit, evil-speaking,

and slandering ; while drunkenness, gluttony, murders, adulteries, fornications, in thought or deed, completely sacrifice all else to the indulgence of self.

The working of any *one* such form of selfishness is quite sufficient, in time, to destroy the mental and moral constitution of the man (or woman), as in becoming the impersonation of pride or malice ; but not unfrequently, two or several, passions take possession of him—as in a combination of *sensualities*. In either way, the *whole* being of the man gets disordered throughout and undergoes degeneration. Here is one, whose *affections* are centred in self ; whose *imagination*, a most fertile faculty, is unhealthy or foul ; whose *thoughts* and *devices* are evil ; whose *will*, the highest prerogative of man, is enfeebled or paralysed ; whose *moral sense* is darkened, even into nightfall. And then the bodily organism, the other half of the man, responding to all this disorder or disease of his higher nature, becomes infected, and bears some deep *physical impression* ; in the sour, dry, cold aspect of the habitually uncharitable ; the loveless, joyless, hard-faced expression of the sordid money-grubber ; the careworn, disappointed look of worldly ambition ; the broken health of the drunkard ; or is exhibited in a depraved constitutional condition of the body, for ‘ the life of all his blood is touched corruptibly,’ perchance, from other forms of self-indulgence, and as seen in the trembling, prematurely

old debauchee. There is never a laugh in the heart then, and there is no sun in the soul. The body which should be subject, has gained, indeed, the mastery over the man, bringing him down to the level of *animal* life.

At last, however, this slave to self begins to realise that he is the sport of his own passions and abortive lusts, and then that he is *his own tormentor*; while the painful sense of all the wrong he has ever done, or said, or thought, being in the conscious *I*, intensifies the self-suffering, even to the agony of remorse. And there is no escape from this dark self-tormentor, whose incessant companionship becomes the more intolerable. 'I cannot bear to feel its dogged presence day and night; when I am alone, and when I am in company; to hear its voice whispering, "Wherever thou goest, I shall go. Thou wilt part with all things else, but not with me. There will come a day when thou canst wander out into a beautiful world no longer, when thou must be at home with me."' No *external* circumstances of torture are necessary to complete the torment of this consciousness, in the solitude and despair of a hopeless self.

From the dark prison-house of a selfish self there can be no release, until the sinner, who is thus also his own tormentor, begins to discern that, after all the wrong he has done, he cannot have sinned against merely the knowledge, or even his Sense, of Right, but

against a Righteous Being, Who gave him that inborn knowledge and that sense, to Whom he is thus *bound*, and to Whom *alone* he is and must be *responsible*. But his emancipation from selfdom can never be *complete*, until the sinner feels that he has sinned against a loving Father, Who surely will not see him for ever hard pressed by an enemy he cannot of himself overcome ; Who will set him free from his slavish toils, and from all his self-suffering, intensified by his helplessness and his solitude.

Deliverance from evil cannot be wrought by a process of moral Evolution, or development, in the gradual rising out of a lower nature into a higher nature, unto a perfect man. Freedom can be accomplished only by a *victory* over, and the subjugation of, Evil which has taken possession of the man ; then *he* is perfect.

Where is the Deliverer of man to be found, and Who is He ? Does human consciousness bear witness to Him ?

Now, the Righteousness which every man feels within himself, more or less sensibly, as 'his own personal integrity' (and which must not be confounded with his *knowledge* only of right and wrong), presents the first glimpse of such a Being—in relation to Humanity ; for, although every man is more or less fully conscious also of a Sinfulness in his thoughts, feelings, and actions, and which may seem to constitute himself, yet is he ever *disowning*

and repudiating all this sinfulness as a something which he feels to be *foreign* to his nature and not really *himself* in the central essence of his being?

This sense of personal integrity in man, and which is ever disengaging itself from Evil, is the witness of his consciousness to the existence of a purely *Righteous Person*, and Whose Being, co-extensive with the same sense in every man, is *not individualised*. His existence cannot be identical with man as a sinner; He must have been pre-existent to, and independent of, that Sinfulness, which is felt to be adventitious, and of extraneous origin. But, therefore, in this Righteous Person, man was originally created and constituted; and He must be *inseparably connected* with *each individual* of the Human Race, whereby His righteousness is *felt* to be the man's own; even as the body of a man, existing independently of his personal self, is, nevertheless, felt to be his own.

Evil, having an adventitious character, has certainly overshadowed and eclipsed the full manifestation of this Righteous Person's presence in each of us. But the deepest analysis of human consciousness witnesses that 'I am not apart from Him, nor are you, nor is any man, woman, or child.' Then the further conviction comes home, that He—Whose righteousness is co-extensive with every man's knowledge of himself—is thus the *Righteous Humanity*;

and that He—Whose righteousness is felt to be even mightier than all the Evil in us—could be the *Deliverer* and *Redeemer* of Mankind from the power of Evil.

Closely allied to Humanity as the Lord of Man—the Head of Man, the True and Perfect Man; in His Righteousness, this Person must be *One with God*, Who when He created ‘man in His own Image’ (Gen. i.) created ‘him in Him’ (St. John, i.). He is the *immediate* source of Human *Life*—physical and psychological.

Contemplated only in His unity with Deity—or, in His Image-relationship to God, He might indeed seem to be a shadow personage, Whose existence can scarcely be realised, and Who is removed at an infinite distance from mankind; but, as the Righteous Lord of Man’s Life, and existing in close contact with each individual man, whose personality is thus a *double-faced unity*, His presence is brought very near to him as having, indeed, an *intimate personal connexion* with him. And thus the presence of this Righteous Being—Who One with God, is no less One with man—individually, is felt to be a personal Deliverer and Redeemer, a ‘personal Saviour,’ as He is often called, but whose connexion with him cannot be otherwise personally realised.

From the beginning of man’s creation, in his capacity as a moral being, God must have spoken to

him by the voice of this Righteous Person, Who, by His twofold relationship to God and man, can be the only source of all the light that ever visits him, and of all the righteous thoughts and acts he is ever able to conceive or do ; His utterances constituting man's conscience in the knowledge and apprehension of right and wrong ; 'Who (also) spake by the prophets.'

But, if when the fulness of time had come the Righteous Lord of Man Himself became Incarnate—'took Flesh,' as man, then would He *manifest* or declare Himself, Whose presence in connexion with every man is obscured by Evil ; and then, also, He would have lovingly sacrificed Himself, as a pre-existent Being, by entering into *each man's* miseries his griefs, his sufferings, and his death—indeed, all the consequences of his sin, that He might *destroy* all the works of Evil wrought in man's nature.

Here, then, is a Being Who, in His Oneness with God and man, is the Righteous and Loving Lord of Humanity, and the Life and the Light of men.

Has such a Being ever been manifested to this world of sense ?

Christ Jesus—'the Express Image'—'the Son of God,' and 'the Son of Man'—Incarnate, is none other than the righteous Lord of Man in the Flesh. This identification is attested by His perfectly righteous human life. But His resurrection to physical life (after His death in that sense) as man, further attests



that He could not be an hereditary descendant from the first of the human race, who all die, without such restoration to life; but that He is the embodiment of a pre-existent Righteous Being, and Who is also the Root of Humanity—not any individualised form of mankind; a Person in Whom man's life was originally created, and in Whom he is constituted in righteousness—and not made independently and separately, as a single righteous being.

The pre-existent Being of such a Person, by His Incarnation as man, becomes that of every individual human being *in* Him—the Root of Humanity Himself having taken Flesh.

Thence His *Life*, in its perfect Righteousness; His *Death*, in the Atoning efficacy, therefore, of His self-sacrificing obedience unto the consequence of man's sin; His *Resurrection*, in its Life-restoring power; and His *Ascension*, in a Spiritualised form of Humanity: each and all having been done in the body of man's sin, become the prerogative of every man, woman, and child, *individually*, by inborn personal connexion with and vital inclusion *in* Him.

His Personality in the Flesh thereby gained the *victory* of each individual human being, in the *body*, for the body, and over the body.

'What think ye of Christ?' and 'Is life worth living?'



## CHAPTER III.

## THE REVELATION OF CHRIST.

CHRIST Revealed or Disclosed:—1. His own relationship to God and Man; 2. Thence the true relationship of God to Man; 3. Himself He Revealed: (1), as the Light and the Life of Man; (2), as the Righteous Lord of Humanity; (3), as the Deliverer of Man from the Power of Evil, and his Redeemer; and as the One full Atonement for all his Sin.

1. God—the Father. In the whole course of Christ's life upon Earth, He spoke and acted as never Man taught and acted; yet He ever disclaimed all that He said and did as His *own*; He credited Himself with no supernatural Righteousness and Power; that He was nothing in Himself (1) apart from His *Oneness* (2) with God, of Whom He is the Express reflex Image (3); and thus He revealed the 'Fatherhood' of God in relationship to Himself, bearing the only likeness of an only 'Son.' That in virtue of their Unity His Father actually spoke (4) and did the works *in* Him; but that He, the Father, is the *Absolute* source of Righteousness and Life, of which, however, He is the full *Expression* (5).

(1) 'I can, said He, of Mine own Self do nothing'

(St. John, v. 30). (2), 'I and my Father are One' (St. John, x. 30). (3), 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' (St. John, xiv. 9). (4), 'The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself, but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works' (St. John, xiv. 10). (5), 'Even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak' (St. John, xii. 50).

As in a mirror, therefore, Christ manifested the Father; but the mirror is double-faced, and the obverse side of Him shows His relationship to Humanity—His Human Nature, His Oneness with Man, being evident. He declared also the absolute inclusion (1) and the dependency (2) of all Mankind *in* Himself.

(1), 'I am the Vine, ye are the Branches; and (2) as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me' (St. John, xv. 5).

2. Christ claimed also for Mankind the relationship of Brethren to Himself—as *their* 'Elder Brother;' and thence *their* Sonship also to the Father of both. Consequently, as all Men are Children of the same Parent, so then are *they* Brethren.

But this relation of Sonship to the Father imports that man is *essentially* a Spiritual Being, inhabiting a body; his true nature being declared by his relationship to God—Himself a Spirit. There-

fore, that the body should be subject to, not the master of, the spiritual part of Man's nature.

Christ's *Religion* — Christianity — embraces these Three Cardinal Principles : that each Man should hold his body in subjection to his Spirit ; the Universal Brotherhood of Mankind (1) ; the Fatherhood of God (2).

(1.) ' If a Man love God, let him love his *Brother* also.' ' Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these *My* Brethren, ye did it unto Me.' (2.) ' Be ye, therefore, Merciful, even as your *Father* in Heaven is Merciful.' ' I ascend to *My* Father, and *your* Father ; to My God and your God.'

*Faith*, or Belief, as felt in the fullest sense of loving, implicit trust and confidence in God the Father, is an act of Righteousness, and the highest that Man is capable of. ' Faith in God is accounted Righteousness ' (Rom. iv. 5). Such was the righteousness of Abraham, and of Mankind who had never learned to spell the word Father in the Being of God for ages before the coming of Christ, and such can alone be the righteousness of the vast majority of Mankind, who, never having heard of the Fatherhood of God, put their trust in some less personal conception of Deity, according to the light that is in them.

3. Christ Revealed Himself (1). 'The "Light" of

the World,' is one of the *three* aspects of His Revelation in the manifestation of Himself.

It is quite reasonable to believe that Man would never have needed, originally, any enlightenment respecting the ties of God's Fatherhood, and of an Universal Brotherhood, such as the Incarnation of Christ alone has taught the World to feel; for these relationships would have been no less natural than those which subsist, although seldom fully felt, among the members of a Family. But the fact of such a two-fold Revelation to the World having been needed, followed by a far higher conception of Human relationships, implies that Man's Nature had undergone some radical perversion, of which he is thus the witness; in his having fallen away from a primitive state of being and lapsed into Selfdom, breaking up the natural Brotherhood of Mankind, and darkening the vision Man had of his Father's countenance, in the full light of his primitive Consciousness.

But Man's *personal* need of a yet *further* Revelation as to what he should be for his own well-being is equally experienced, at least by all students of themselves, and alike bears evidence of a radical defection from the state of perfect Righteousness in which he was constituted, the image of which still remains uneffaced in him.

That the Effulgent 'Light' should have appeared in the person of a man, who held one of the lowest

positions in the social scale, as an illiterate, handicraft working man—a carpenter—might seem to be an incredible impersonation, and very unlike Him, Who it was the desire of all Nations to see.

But His social insignificance clearly emphasises the fact that He could not have owed anything to the advantages of birth—in His education, rank, wealth, political, or other power ; that He was not some such man of earthly importance raised by any adventitious circumstances to a position of commanding superiority above his fellow-men. And He affected no popular *rôle* to conciliate the prejudices of the Learned, the Titled, the Wealthy, or the Powerful in this World ; on the contrary, He opposed and denounced them all. He estranged and alienated Himself from all such Men, and from all Parties of Religious or Secular influence, until, when he stood at the foot of the Cross, He literally had not a true male friend in the World. Stop a moment—His Disciples. Well, the few of them who waited to look at the spectacle of soul-suffering and dying innocence ‘stood afar off’—with one exception. They were Gallery-spectators of the greatest tragedy which could ever be witnessed.

What a stupendous demand does the Carpenter make upon the Faith of Mankind in Him !

Evidently He was not the marvellous product of an intellectual or a moral development in His Age or Country ; for His personality bears no marks of Jewish,

Greek, or Roman nationality—His contemporary *environment*. In Him ‘there is no trace of the fanaticism, formularism, and exclusiveness of the Jewish Race to which He belonged, of the intellectual pride of the Greek, of the political pride of the Roman.’ \* Nor, be it observed, was His personality masculine or feminine; He exhibits alike the perfection of Manhood and of Womanhood. His cast of thought and feeling, to be inferred from His utterances, was sometimes that of one sex, sometimes of the other. With manly force of character, He ever portrays womanly grace and tenderness. Speaking as a man of the world might say to other such men, ‘What will it *profit* a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?’ He says, also, with a trait of true womanly affection, ‘Where your *treasure* is, there will your heart be also.’ But combining in Himself the highest ideal type of the Human, the feminine character seemed to be predominant; He associated more intimately, and was more at home, with women, and they understood Him better than His Disciples. ‘Mary kept all His sayings, and pondered them in her heart;’ and thousands upon thousands of Mary’s Sisters for generations have felt themselves more in touch with Him, and up to the present hour, even now,

\* Goldwin Smith: ‘On some supposed consequences of the Doctrine of Historical Progress.’

have a more vital communion with Him than men generally gain in a natural way by the profoundest psychological study. Among His Disciples, John alone—‘the beloved’—and of kindred nature, as a man, translated the inmost Consciousness of the Master to Whom he listened, and Whose thoughts and feelings he would seem to have transcribed, in some portions of his record, by his spiritual communion with Him.

But the social nonentity of this Teacher—seemingly an illiterate Carpenter—exhibits even more vividly than the absence of any trace of Nationality in Him, or than the combined sexual character of His Humanity, a Personality which was not Earth-born. Viewed in the ‘Light’ of His human life, He rises to an immeasurable elevation above the ‘wondering, upturned eyes of mortals;’ extinguishing all other lights through the centuries before and since His appearance—even as the brightest stars become invisible, retiring from the gaze of mankind in the presence of the beaming orb of day. For the greatest of all His discoveries to us is Himself, at once the Light of the World, and the chief *subject* of His enlightenment to us, the Teacher, and the chief *subject* of His Teaching to us; centering all in Himself.

In thus contemplating Him, no criticism can ‘bring the life of Christ down from the clouds, and



restore Him to the domain of human history;’ simply because Human Consciousness cannot recognise in Him the product of Evolution from any human life. But Humanity does not feel itself to be deeply in *touch* with Him, and He does represent the beginning of a new Moral Evolution of Mankind, by a recreation and a reinfusion of Vitality. The Lord of Man and the Express Image of God, in Whom Man, as an individual, was originally created and constituted in Righteousness, having Himself taken Flesh ; every man who is re-created and born again *in* Him is a new creature. He has new ‘Life,’ as well as new ‘Light.’

To the Affections of Man He is their chief attraction ; to the Intellect and the Conscience He is Light ; to the Will He imparts the felt energy and the freedom of new Life ; *all* this *vital* reconstitution of the inner Man differing entirely from the product of Self-love, which would give the victory of Animal life over the Man, and the issue of which is his death. The testimony of Consciousness, by way of personal experience, is here applicable, for the Man knows himself to be what he was not in the days of his flesh-life, his benighted bondage and slavery ; that he has indeed come out of darkness into marvellous light and is released from the hold of a Mortal Enemy.

Well may we date the living History of Mankind from the time of Man’s re-creation in Christ, speaking of the present year as Anno Domini —, and for-



getting all the dark ages upon ages, even with the *culture* of Greece and Rome, which had preceded the Brightness of His Coming.

But there must be an *Incarnate* Teacher, whose Teaching is not communicated so often by precept, as mostly by the Example of His own life. He tells us, not as Philosophy would teach, what to do, but shows us *how* to do it. He must not only be the 'Life' and the 'Light' to His followers, but also the 'Way.'

Even the *passive* Virtues—humility, patience, long-suffering, resignation, with all the graces and beauties of a perfect human character in a thousand forms of expression—can be learnt only by imitation ; just as an Artist works from a Model. Hence the moral value of many an apparently worthless life, in the meekness of some worn-down sufferer. All the *activities* of doing good to the poor and the sick, and in the dissemination of Truth, are taught only by a practical course of instruction from life. And in treading the devious and up-hill path of *daily duty* from youth to age, the Way is everything to the pilgrim. Like a true Guide to an Alpine Climber, He says, I know all the difficulties and the perils of the Ascent. Do as I do. To begin : lash yourself to Me. Now plant your foot on that step-mark of Mine ; then stand for a moment on that secure ledge of rock ; give Me your hand, and I will pull you up higher ; and so on, along

a steep and narrow track, until after years of toil the summit is gained. Then, looking down, you behold the World laying at your feet ; you see also the dangers and hair-breadth escapes through which you have passed safely in His hand ; and you catch a glimpse of the wondrous view He has opened up to you—Yonder, and Excelsior !

But what of the Imitation of Christ's *inner* Manhood as expressed in word, in the faultless language of a faultless inner life of thought and feeling ? Speech is the outcome and the index of this inner life ; and what is His Teaching here for our guidance ? ' Let your communication be yea, yea ; nay, nay ; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of Evil ' in *you*. Clearly He thus intimates the impossibility of our becoming like unto Him in all He thought and felt, by having thus restricted our utterances to the simplest affirmation of the true and the false ; seeing as He does that whenever these movements of the Conscience pass through any of our thoughts, or our feelings, the admixture is Evil, and language issuing therefrom is corrupt. But His profound knowledge of this deeply *ingrown* depravity of Human Consciousness bespeaks His authority for imposing the most circumspect restriction upon our speech from morn to night ; ever checking the outflow, sometimes the torrent, of that tainted stream, which spreads far and wide through the minds of others, and the influence

of which is transmitted onwards, to the end of Time! Impossible as it would be to obey Christ's command to the letter, we shall best follow His Teaching, in spirit and in truth, as touching our communications with others, by ever conveying our thoughts and feelings in the *measured* utterance which characterised all He said. The same self-restraint should be exercised in our written, no less than in our verbal, expressions; for letters, books, &c., constitute that ocean of the human mind where thought rides permanently at anchor.

But how emphatically does Christ's intimate knowledge of our innermost depravity warn us of the responsibility we incur, individually, by the voluntary outcome of indwelling Evil in our unguarded conversations and written communications; bearing fruit in other persons, and living on for Ages! If the stream of thought and feeling issuing from any man, or woman, has thus an influence for better or for worse, which cannot be calculated, the *suggestiveness* of what is said or written is even a more fertile source of good or evil. The drapery of verbal or of written expression often exposes far more of that which it affects to conceal; and Authors who are answerable for purity of mind and heart in the coming generation of human souls should ponder the incalculable responsibility which rests upon them; as when they present the allurements of vice in the



form of virtue, their heroines of chastity portrayed with the insidious suggestiveness which defiles some of our literature and 'realistic' novels.

These reflections will suffice to indicate the possible iniquity of the inner life of any human being and its far-reaching dissemination. Let, therefore, only that Mind be in us, as far as possible, which was in Him, Whose Teaching cannot be studied too deeply, as the one expression of perfection in Human character, in manhood and womanhood.

If we may dare to analyse the workings of that Human Mind, which in Christ was morally perfect, although in contact with a Sinful Incarnation, it would appear that the Son of Man, in His all-inclusive Humanity, must have known and felt all the desperate passions of the Human Race, in the adulterer, the murderer, and other forms of Flesh-life; for He Himself speaks of their doings as movements of the Heart, apart from action. Whence, then, His uncontaminated perfection of Human character? His freedom from Sin must be referred to the sovereignty of the Human Will in Him, as the pre-existent Lord of Man's Being, Incarnate, but which in all Mankind has become subject to the Power of Evil. Thoughts and desires are not in themselves sinful; only 'when desire is conceived, *i.e.*, entertained by a movement of the Will, it bringeth forth Sin.'

2. Christ, as 'the Righteous Lord of Humanity,' by His Incarnation, Revealed His Personality in His *Sinless* Human Life before Mankind could see in Him their Deliverer from the Power of Evil, and their Redemption also in Him.

His *evident* moral Perfection as Man, under all the circumstances and temptations of His Human nature, involves His own *claim* to *complete* freedom from Sin. 'Which of you convinces (convicts) me of Sin?' is the challenge He issues to all men alike; the foes by whom He was ever surrounded, in the persons of priests and pharisees, &c.; and the sceptics who in every age, responding to His challenge, have subjected the record of His life to the keenest and fiercest criticism with the unanimous verdict of Pilate — 'I find no fault in this man;' that in Him all Mankind recognises *the* One, spotless Humanity. Moreover, the susceptibility or tenderness of any man's conscience to discover any, the slightest moral taint in himself, is always proportionate to his own rectitude of character; and thus it is that Christ's introspective sense of His own Sinlessness witnesses the truth of His self-declaration; and hence the acknowledged perfection of His character as a man necessarily involves the further concession of His own claim to *Moral Supremacy*.

Otherwise, such a claim must be referable to monstrous pride, or appalling hypocrisy and wilful deception; either of which radical defects of moral

character would be quite incompatible with the Human Perfection, of which He *is* the acknowledged Type; the Being who was 'meek and lowly' in the eyes of all men, proclaimed of Himself, 'Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away'; they are 'Spirit,' and they are 'Life.' This moral Supremacy must be truly His to be compatible with the lowly meekness of true humility, apart from the slightest imputation of conceit or hypocritical deception.

The character of this Being must consistently stand or fall altogether, as a Unity; and without any outrages upon the Human Conscience, upon whose moral Faith in Him He makes the highest demands.

'Without Me, ye can do nothing,' is another form of the self-assertion of His moral Supremacy. Yes. But He Who thus simply spoke the Truth concerning Himself never goes about asserting for His *own* sake His claim to such authority, or arguing with other men in proof of Who He is: He is ever Majestically Conscious of Himself.

His Self-Consciousness was, indeed, quite unique—the witness of Himself, and which at once distinguished Him from the purely Human; and thus He alone was the supremely *self-contained*. Ever disdaining any adventitious Title—'Art Thou the King of the Jews?' He replies, 'Thou sayest it.' He would not even assert His own claims to satisfy an idle or a mocking inquiry. 'Art Thou the Christ?' 'If I tell



you, ye will not believe.' 'Art Thou then the Son of God?' 'Ye say that I am.' The Human, as an individual man, however 'great' he may be, is never self-contained; he feels to draw his life from the breath of his fellow-men, from whom he is ever seeking to get some mark of their recognition—some title, honour, or official position, as a proof to him of his own individual existence. Utterly soul-destroying, as the source of Man's inner life, extraneous, worldly distinctions may be subservient to the well-being of Society, as marks of public appreciation and a corresponding order of merit; but not to be deemed meritorious in themselves, nor borne with the consciousness of self-importance. Even true dignity in man must be tempered with true humility, or it will turn into cynical pride. The profound humility of the alone self-contained exhibited His Majestic consciousness of Himself, with the perfection of Manhood.

That He was not a mere Moral Enthusiast, labouring under a life-long delusion of *self*-deception, is clearly disproved by the personal characteristics of which His life bears evidence. If the life-history of Christ were read without prejudice, as by an impartial critic who had discovered it in turning over some collection of old books, where would he find in that biography any trace of the wild impetuosity of language, the bitter intolerance of opposition, and

the fierce denunciation of all opponents which characterises the fanatic? 'If any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not . . . the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.' Such is the calm language, not of an irrepressible enthusiast, but of One Who knows the power of Truth to convince and to convict at last. And no less significant of His freedom from any moral derangement is the *equal balance* of all excellence which His character presents, undisturbed by any predominant exaggeration, which is not only undiscoverable in Him, but which would have destroyed that uniform excellence.

Clearly, also, He was not an abstract Psychological study of Human Perfection, drawn from the fertile and exalted or æsthetic imagination of some consummate artist, copied from no human life, and himself, also, quite unable to be that which he has so vividly conceived and portrayed; and whose illustrious name is quite unknown—a mere myth in the world's history of Great Artists. Here there would have been the very real life of a Person, and Whose character is quite *unique*, but for which no owner can be found in the whole history of Man; yet the conception of some human mind—that of a mythical person, whose name cannot be produced.

The Sinless Humanity of Christ exhibits the picture of Righteousness holding Supremacy over



Evil in Man. But for this achievement the battle must be fought under the conditions of an *actual* trial, and, therefore, with no advantage given to Man by the attachment of a Righteous Being Who was not previously connected with him, and Who, if He *became* united to him for the purpose of undergoing this trial of strength in the person of Man, would have destroyed his human identity in the person of a *substitute* Man engaged in the struggle. Indeed, the conditions must be so thoroughly Human that, as Professor Maurice observes, 'Had the Son of God Incarnate possessed any advantage in that trial, any power, save that which came from simple trust in His Father, from the refusal to make or *prove* Himself His Son, instead of depending on His word and pledge, we should not feel that a *real* victory had been won' in Man, and for Man. And then would follow the inevitable consequences of such belief in a Conqueror Who should be *invincible*; that *our* Flesh must be accursed in itself; that *our* bodies or *our* souls are the subject of a necessary and ineradicable Evil, and not made for all Good. That would be to Mankind a Religion of despair.

But, the challenge of Evil demands the 'Incarnation' of Righteousness in Man. That a battle in the Flesh was necessary, and equally so to redeem the body, which might be deemed the poor and ignoble part of Man, but which, as the World of Sense-life,

and generating all the lusts of the Flesh, constitutes the Animal being, in conflict with Man's Spiritual Nature. Consequently, the Incarnation could not have been manifested for the purpose of saving the soul alone. No ; nor to save the souls and bodies of a few *Elect* persons who share the pollutions of the Flesh and the Death common to *all* Mankind. If, moreover, the doctrine of Election were true, and its congenor Predestination, then how could I, in good faith, sympathise with the (hopeless) sufferings and (hopeless) sorrows of *all* Human beings? and did I not believe there was One in Whom they are *all* alike united, and Who bore human suffering and sorrow for the Good of all alike?

Christ, 'the Deliverer' and 'the Redeemer' of Man, and the 'One full Atonement' for all his Sin.

The *Sinless Life* of Christ consists in His having perfectly given up, in the person man, that Self-Will which is the root of all his Sins and the cause of all his Miseries, and in His entire surrender of Himself in *perfect obedience* to the Will of the Father ; His complete abnegation of Self having been carried out under all the conditions of human life.

He thus demonstrated that Man is not inherently Sinful, and incapable of freedom from Evil ; and that His Humanity is that which each Man should bear, and that to which each Man shall be raised in Him—the 'Son of Man,' no less than the Son of God ; the

former being the title which He nearly always bore when speaking of Himself. Herein lies Man's Deliverance from Evil and his Redemption or restoration to Moral Perfection.

But although He must be unmistakably Human Who thus exhibits the Perfection of Humanity, He could not have been the product of a Moral Evolution from the ranks of Mankind to a standard of supreme and unapproachable excellence, of which the history of our Race presents no intermediate forms, in the course of such development.

The perfection of Humanity in Christ must, therefore, be the Expression of God in Manhood ; *not* by 'the taking of Manhood into God,' but by the reproduction of God—the Father's lost Image—in Man. In the Incarnate Christ we thus behold the True Man ; and Who, in His loving and willing obedience, is the fulfilment of His Father's Will in Earth as it is in Heaven.

This entire surrender of Himself characterised His Life ; but, in His undergoing the Death which is consequent on Man's Sin, by the *Voluntary* Sacrifice of Himself, Who, being Sinless, was exempt from death, no less also than in His pre-existent Being, and as the Source of Human life, He was not subject to the death of Man—He thus underwent *the* test, and exhibited the *consummation* of His obedience, in the Person of Man, to the Will of the Father. And in that He offered His whole Being—Body and Soul—

His was the *only complete* Sacrifice ever made, even by Him, and is thus the *full* Atonement for all the Sin of Man's disobedience, and the *just* ground of God's acceptance of Mankind *in* Him. For, as the disobedience of Man's Will is the root and source of all Sin, and of his separation from God, so, then, the entire submission of willing obedience is that Atonement which restores man to his original relation with his Father.

Thus, Christ Crucified—'to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness'—is *the* meeting-point between Man and the Father, and of His embracing Reconciliation with him in the Humanity of His Son—'The Beloved.'

The Cross is verily the symbol of that perfect obedience in the Sonship of Man, 'which took away (separating) Sin' by re-uniting the human with the Divine Will; and taketh away the Sin of the 'whole World' in His inclusive Humanity.

But Christ's sacrifice of Himself should ever be contemplated in the light of His Incarnation and His Human Life, as well as by His entering into the Death of Man, the whole constituting an Infinite Sacrifice of the independent Personality He had before all Worlds, for the sake of Humanity. When He 'took Flesh' He lost for ever His pre-Incarnate Being, to re-instate the Image of God in Man; Love's loss of Self, to live in another Person, Uniting both. Hence the Sacrifice of Christ has a far wider significance than when restricted to its consummation

in His Death. And His is *the* one Sacrifice which alone transcends all that any human being could possibly make for others of his own nature, by a far less personal and complete identification of himself with their sorrows and sufferings, even unto death.

‘His Obedience unto Death’ carries with it even more than Redemption of Man’s Moral Being. By the final sacrifice of His Life to the Death of us all, He alone could fulfil the Father’s loving *purpose* of delivering Mankind from their final subjection to physical Death, the last stronghold of their great Adversary, and rescuing them *in* the inclusiveness of His Resurrection. Hence ‘the *power* of His Resurrection.’ He entered into our Death that we should share in His Resurrection.

The Efficacy of the Atonement consisting in the fullest Obedience of Christ, as Man, this interpretation meets all the difficulties which are otherwise insuperable, in connexion with the Moral necessity for the Sacrifice of His physical Life, when viewed either as a Propitiatory or Conciliatory Offering, or as a Penalty for Sin, to meet the demands of God’s Justice.

Thus, in virtue of His having no Sins of His own to answer for, He alone could bear the Sins of others, by His voluntary subjection to the consequence of Sin in that physical death, which to all other of Mankind is inevitable. In *this* sense ‘He Who knew

no Sin was *made* (to represent) Sin for us ;' and so also 'He bore *our* Sins upon the Cross.' And 'as by the Disobedience of one Man many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of One shall many be made Righteous.'

But, as weighed in the balance of Justice, a perfectly Innocent Being could not undertake to bear the Sins of others, and thus to *propitiate*, i.e., *conciliate*, the Father for what they had done. And, in dying to rescue Man from the power of Evil, in the physical death it had entailed upon him, He could not have died to rescue him from the hand of the Father.

Viewed as a legal *Penalty* for Sin, the Law could take its course only in the person of the Sinner ; and does not execute itself if a perfectly innocent person, against whom it is not directed, interposes to bear the punishment it demands. Nor would the conscience of Man feel satisfied by supposing an *Equivalent* for Sin to have been offered in Christ's sinless death ; since even the human heart can forgive a fellow-creature, without exacting a *quid pro quo* from him ; and if we do demand such satisfaction for a wrong, we feel that we violate Christ's own express Teaching of the Father to us, 'Be ye Merciful' (freely) 'even as your Father in Heaven is' (freely) 'Merciful.'

Forgiveness by a bare act of *Amnesty* would leave the human heart and will unchanged ; and whether a propitiatory offering, a penalty, or an



equivalent for Sin be paid, or given, the unreconciled will of Man to the Father would leave the root of (all) Sin uneradicated.

To see in the Death of Christ the satisfaction of an Avenging Deity, Who looked with more complacency on the spectacle because it was one of suffering Innocence, would transform a loving Father into a grim Moloch, and the Cross into a shamble; gratifying only to the vilest feelings of the human heart in demanding blood for blood; instead of seeing in the blood-shedding of the Son its preciousness as a *symbol* of His loving Self-sacrificing Obedience, even unto death, undergone with the suffering of the Crucifixion and the degradation of a malefactor.

The materialistic tendency of the human mind, in a large proportion of persons, is evinced by their blood-sacrificial view of Christ's death. But the too common phrase, 'washing in His Blood,' or being 'sprinkled with it,' apparently expressive of an old Jewish rite, is a felt outrage upon the (Christian) Conscience. And the God of Man's Conscience speaks to him in language, not of vengeance, but of Mercy, behind the clouds of Calvary: 'God so *loved* the World, He *sent* His Son to be the Reconciliation for our Sins.'

While thus reading the meaning of the Crucifixion in the light of Conscience and of Revelation,



a mere eye-sight observer might see in it only the death of a supposed Impostor, Who had failed to substantiate His claims to the authority of His Teaching and Personal Supremacy. 'If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross, and we will believe Thee.' 'He saved others, Himself He cannot save.' In witnessing His Death, therefore, the disciples were in the position of bankrupts who had invested their all in a bubble concern. They seem to have gone away terrified ; they were found three days afterwards in an upper room, with the 'doors locked for fear of the Jews,' and were then engaged in discussing the state of their affairs.

But He who *foretold* His own death,\* and with regard to all the particulars of time, place, mode, and circumstance, could not have been an Impostor ; His further prediction, that He would resume His physical life again three days after death, was seemingly incredible, and clearly indicates that He was not unwillingly submitting to an Execution. Indeed, any man who nowadays foretold the when, the where, and the how he would die, would find no difficulty whatever

\* 'In going up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them : We go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death ; and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him ; and the third day He shall rise again' (St. Matt. xx. 17).

in gaining followers who would pin their faith in his veracity respecting all he had said and taught them, or foretold of *their* future.

A more contemplative eye-sight observer might see in the Crucifixion only the death of a Martyr, a man dying for the Truth, as he believed, rather than renounce it at the last. And so Christ *was* a Martyr indeed. But His Martyrdom, as the only interpretation of His death, is quite inconsistent with the conduct of One Who 'laid down His life that He might take it again,' a death which at once raises Him out of the ranks of all other Martyrs, in that the sacrifice of His life bears some far deeper significance than as the 'witness of Truth.' As a Martyr, His death would make the deepest impression upon the Human Mind, and have a fascinating influence upon the Human Heart, attracting all men through the Centuries to the study of His life—at once wonderful, beneficent, and beautiful. 'If I be lifted up I will draw all men after Me.' But Martyrdom in no way indicates the 'preciousness' of His Death *for* Them. Nor does the psychologist see in the demeanour of the central figure on Mount Calvary a trace of the triumphant exultation of the Martyr. His was a majestic resignation to some deep anguish of Soul. May we not reverently interpret it to be, that—in the Person of the Son of God, Incarnate and Obedient, even to wearing the badge of Sin, while

undergoing the sufferings of Man's bodily death in consequence—never before, nor since, were Good and Evil, Righteousness and Sin, Infinitely opposed, brought so closely face to face? the anguish of His Soul was that which only a perfectly Holy Being could feel as the Representative of Sin; and that His Sorrow was that which only perfect Love could feel for Sinners, of whose lost and enslaved condition His World-containing Humanity made Him alone so fully Conscious. 'Complete suffering for Sin, and with Sin, is possible only in One Who Himself is completely free from it.' But what if the Sinless Soul-Sufferer is One also Who knows and feels the Sins of all Mankind in the past, the present, and the future generations of this World's dark history?

The *Satisfaction* to God in the Death of Christ is the perfection of Love: the Father seeing His own Love, the essence of Himself, reflected in the Love of His Son's voluntary sacrifice of His Life, and in loving, perfect Obedience to the Father's Will; as the Atonement for all the Sin of Man's Disobedience, and to Deliver him from the power of his great Enemy, as witnessed in His own Resurrection.

Christ's Atonement of Perfect Obedience in Humanity, the *Justification* of God's *Forgiveness*, and *Remission* or Cancelling of Man's Sin.

The Sinner's Penitence alone could not justify

God's Forgiveness of Sin. No Sin, in thought, word, or deed, by any human being, can possibly do any injury to God ; nor is there ever any intention on the part of the Sinner to offend Him. He, therefore, cannot feel that resentment, which may be removed by the Sinner's contrition ; not as a man who has been injured or wronged by another man would feel inimical, but forgives the offender, who is sorry for what he has done towards him, and begs his pardon. Contrition subdues resentment in the human mind, but not in the Being of God, simply because such a feeling cannot be provoked in Him by anything man can do, even were it done intentionally, to rouse His enmity.

Thus the Moral relationship between Man and Man, and of God to Man, are entirely different, and no argument respecting human forgiveness can extend to the Godhead.

Nor can God's Compassion alone, Infinite as it is, move him to the Forgiveness of Sin ; for then He might, or would, forgive alike the impenitent and the penitent.

God's loving Compassion can be exercised only with the indissoluble *union* of His own perfect Righteousness, thus implying that the Sinner must be restored somehow to a *righteous state of relationship* with God before His Forgiveness can possibly be the expression of His Love, and which the Sinner's penitent contrition—with his desire and effort not to

err again—his Repentance, could not possibly move, by divorcing His Love from His Righteousness.

In this inseparable union of God's Love and Righteousness lies the *moral necessity* of the Atonement for Man's Sin, his At-one-ment with God, in order to His Forgiveness of the Penitent.

There must be a Righteous Person, and Who is connected with Man, one with Man, and Whose Personality includes all Mankind, collectively and individually; the Righteous Humanity. Then if any man, individually, Sin, he has this re-uniting Mediator with God. Jesus Christ, 'the Righteous,' in His Humanity, is the Propitiation, or *Reconciliation* for all Sin. As connected with, and included *in*, Him, if then any man confesses his Sin, with a penitent desire and effort not to commit it again; thus conditioned, God is faithful and *just* to forgive him his Sin, whether in thought, word, or deed, absolving him instantly; holding, as that man does, this re-united relationship to His Love and Righteousness combined.

In the highest type of *human* character, these two moral attributes are necessarily connected, and they always move together, for love can love only that which is lovely.

The Apostolic writers, notably Paul, the most profound theologian and astute logician, were astounded with the fact, but of which they are all alike convinced, that God forgives Sin; that 'all Sin—past,

present, and future—is forgiven unto Men;’ and equally sure are they that *in* Christ there is the otherwise insuperable Reconciliation of Righteousness with Unrighteousness, opposed themselves as Light and Darkness. These first Teachers of the Christian Theology never tire of repeating the fact of this humanly incredible concord, that Mercy and Righteousness *have* co-operated in the Forgiveness of Man’s Sin, and this by virtue of his having passed into a new and righteous relationship with God, in the Person of Christ, by ‘a new and living way.’ Thence, moreover, Man is freed from his original relation to the Law, which expresses the Righteousness of God, but which could not be fulfilled *personally* by one who is in the power of a mortal Enemy to Mankind. Consequently, no human being is judged by his, or her, personal relation to the standard of perfect obedience to the Divine Law, and is absolved from all transgressions of the moral demands to which he, or she, was subject, and from the penalties incurred, alike individually, when living under the inexorable dominion of the Law.

Briefly, there is a pledge to *each* and every member of the Human Race *in* Christ, not only of God’s Forgiveness, but also of His Remission or cancelling of all Sin, and, consequently, of all Legal punishment entailed thereby.

This apprehension of a *personal* Saviour, ‘Who

loved *me* and gave Himself *for me*,' as entirely as if there were no other human being on the face of the Earth, is all-in-all to the Christian. Surely one blessing, at least, is the Sinner's own; for had Man been without free Will, incapable of Sinning, he could never have known what it is to feel forgiven.

'Until the Law, Sin was in the World; but Sin is not imputed when there is no Law' (Rom. v. 13). 'By the deeds of the Law no Flesh shall be justified' (Rom. iii. 20). 'But ye are dead to the Law' (Rom. vii. 4). 'Ye are not under the Law, but under Grace'; Mercy co-operating with Righteousness (Rom. vi. 14). 'Being justified freely by His Grace, through the Redemption that is *in* Christ Jesus,' the Righteous Humanity (Rom. iii. 24).

The generations of Mankind who lived under the Law must likewise have been judged in the light of the *pre*-Incarnate Christ's Atonement, which was known to God 'from the foundation of the World.' Thus was Man released, in the sight of God, from the otherwise inevitable demands of His absolute Righteousness expressed in His Law; and thus also was provided a rescue from the ultimate consequences of Man's subjection to the Power of Evil, consequences which are referred to as the 'penalties' of breaking the Law of Righteousness, but which are really the inherent outcome of evil-doing. This rescue was obviously consistent, in Divine Justice,



with the equally foreknown subjection of Man to that Power.

Why the battle between Righteousness and Evil should have been fought, and as if to determine the Supremacy, in the Person of Man (on this Earth alone?), is *the* mystery, which no analysis of Human Consciousness can solve; only one degree less mysterious than the Origin of Evil.

The *Religion* of the Atonement is *Self-Sacrifice*. The Law of all Living Beings is Self-sacrifice, unconsciously or consciously. The hen bird brooding over her young, starves herself, rather than forsake them; or she fights to the death for their preservation, losing her own life that they may live. And, in the 'struggle for life,' the weaker are sacrificed to the 'survival of the fittest.' All such loss of Self, in a thousand forms, is only the unconscious fulfilment of the law of self-sacrifice, for the good of others.

But, in the natural history of Man, the conscious and willing acceptance of the same Law becomes the highest prerogative of his being, and its fulfilment his highest enjoyment. The instinct of the human mother is obeyed in watching the cradle of her infant; but she would also knowingly sacrifice herself to save her offspring. The father yielding, as he knows full well, to the progress of a fatal disease, will toil to death in providing for his otherwise destitute wife and children, his wasted form growing

morally stronger as he lays down his life for them.

Rising yet higher in his conscious obedience to this law, in the highest form of Man's self-sacrifice, lies the essence and the Religion of the Atonement. The loving sacrifice of self, even unto death, in sufferings endured for the cause of Truth; 'to be made as the filth of the World, and the off-scouring of all things,' for His Name's sake; to be ever in the front rank of the fight for the victory of Good over Evil, especially in the rescue of any man, woman, or child from the power of some Evil-surrounding, or of some besetting Sin: that is the noblest impersonation of the Religion of the Atonement. *Vicarious* self-suffering is the lesson of the Cross. 'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.'

In the form of *Self-denial* the same principle of Sacrifice finds expression in the course of daily life; in all the kindnesses shown to others, at some cost to ourselves; and in the ever doing something of self-abandonment for one another among the members of a family—in the Heaven of home-life, and probably in the Father's home hereafter. The school-boy, who saves up his pocket-money for the holidays, not for selfish enjoyment, but with the prospect of giving his little playmate sister some present, which shall be found upon her pillow the morning after his arrival at home, to touch her heart with gladness

and bind her closer to himself, is only one of numberless modes of self-denial for the happiness of others, which attaches the recipient to the giver ; and, extending beyond the domestic circle, binds together the Brotherhood of Mankind.

With relation to God, 'Thy will be done' is the Teaching of the Cross ; and 'Obedience, even unto death,' is that practical aspect of Christianity which may be even more highly appreciated than all the Theological aspirations which Christianity fulfils.

Obedience is the highest tribute of all Man's faculties to the Fatherhood of God. Thy Will be done is the fullest acknowledgment of the Conscience to His Supremacy ; it is the deepest concession of the Intellect, of its own incapacity for judging of what seems wisest to be done. Thy Will be done bespeaks the entire surrender of the human Will, and such an expression would have no meaning if His Will necessarily coincided with our own ; uttered from the Heart, it is equally the abandonment of all our own desires and affections, leaving nothing for the Imagination to supply ; while the expression pledges our full trust and confidence—our Faith in Him, which could not be exercised if we were able to see our own way to that which is best for us. What an offering up of the *whole* man, woman, or child—to be ruled, thought for, cared for, felt for, nothing doubting ! and what an evidence of His

Divinity, Who, in four words, intelligible to every human being, could thus give voice to all the powers of Man's soul in reverential submission, and in words which can be spoken at any moment of doubt, difficulty, distress, danger, or suffering and weakness! for He alone, by Whom and in Whom Man was created, knows what is in Man, and can anticipate all his dependent needs. Thence, the subsequent petitions of our all-comprehensive Prayer Divinely taught—to be fed by His hand, in daily dependency; to be forgiven, as an erring child; and not to be abandoned in temptation, but to be delivered from the Evil One.

The Religion of obedient *Effort*, at least, can be exercised in daily life and conduct; and every Man may thus feel himself to be a Christian. But such an one, perhaps, knows himself to be no longer what he was in former years. All his moral powers are felt to be much weakened. He walks in the twilight of Conscience, and stumbling about with impaired Moral power of Will, he cannot do the things that he would; his Affections, the most powerful incentive to effort, have long since been used up in other ways. Yet Obedience does his *best*. And the woman—erring, trusting, broken-hearted—'She hath done what she could.' There are plenty of such persons, in advancing years, whose whole Moral constitution is shattered, but who strive to do their *best*. What

is to become of these chronic invalids? They are taken into the Hospital of Christ. They may go on making faithful *effort* to be what they would, but can never be; humbly trusting that He will gather up the fragments of their former selves, that nothing of Humanity shall be *lost*.

‘He was buried.’ What became of Him? He, Whose Being, pre-existent to His Incarnation, became embodied as Man, was now disembodied. Where did He go? Must He not have joined the myriads of the Human Race who had preceded Him in the grave? assuming there be an after-death existence of Man’s personality, as well as of the material of his body—no annihilation of either. ‘He descended into Hades,’ the World of Spirits. But then He, the King of Men’s Spirits, must have been there as a visitor, not to remain a permanent inhabitant. Having visited Earth, as the Bearer of the Father’s Love-message to Mankind, He departed to carry the good news to that immense majority who had succumbed to physical death, and then to deliver them from its power in His Resurrection. What a spectacle must He have beheld in the completed victory (apparently) of their great Enemy, who, by the death which he had brought upon Mankind, through Sin in his service, had thus succeeded in effecting the disjuncture of their souls from their bodies—had broken down the unity of Man’s nature

and reduced him to the level of Animal life, in the beasts that perish! For, what prerogative could be left Him, in the *after-existence* only of Man's personality, with its boundless intellectual and moral powers, when permanently bereft of an organism which can alone enable them to fully exercise their highest functions, as evoked by an *after-environment*, which is essential to their continued development unto perfection? The destruction of Man's Being was what He, the Lord of Man, viewed, and the triumph of the Enemy who had thus gained possession of the Human Race. 'He visited the spirits in Prison.' As when shipwrecked mariners, whose hearts have sunk within them, strain their eyes over the void expanse of the Ocean for some sign of deliverance from the cold, dark, fathomless abyss below, discern at last the approach of the lifeboat, breaking through the waves; even so must the presence of the Son of Man have been to the imprisoned. And then, the hitherto conqueror, he must have stood aghast when One stronger than he appeared to demand the immediate release of the countless multitude of captives he had held in his power for Ages, and to claim them as His Brethren. Poetic thought has never yet conceived, nor pencil ever traced, the appalled dismay of the Arch-fiend, nor the majestic bearing of the invincible Righteous Lord of Humanity in this final issue of their conflict—the victory of Good



over Evil ; nor the exultation of the abject prisoners, long subject to unknown suffering and hopeless despair, now released from bondage. Men, women, and children, a numberless host of all kindreds and nations, who had never known nor heard of their Deliverer; the Heathen World, who had gone to their graves, through centuries past, in hopeless confusion of thought as to what was to become of them, what their true destiny, and who had long found their doom to be their continued slavery in the hands of a relentless Tyrant, now felt suddenly their chains fall off. Emperors of the Old World, Mighty Warriors, renowned Orators, Poets, Philosophers ; Alexander and Augustus, Cæsar, Antony, and Pompey, Demosthenes and Cicero, Homer, Catullus, Virgil, and Horace, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, no less than the menial slaves on Earth, who had all passed to a more galling slavery beyond the tomb, now alike saw and felt their escape in the King of their Spirits ; and Who, as also the Lord of their Life, gave them the fullest assurance of their ultimately complete redemption in His own Resurrection from the grave.

The *Resurrection* of Christ. Physical and 'Moral Evidence alike bear testimony to the record concerning Christ after His death—that 'He rose again from the dead.' (1.) In the restoration to physical life of a Being Who was *pre-existent* to that of the



first man, we behold no violation of natural law, as relating to the (physical) life of all human beings. The human body of Christ was thus physically unconditioned, with regard to the termination of its life. (2.) The Creative *Source* of all Physical Life, human and otherwise, cannot be under the dominion of its own (physical) laws. (3.) The dependent individual man may be subject to death, owing to personal sin-destroying conditions—even as the branch of a tree may perish, while the *Root* of Humanity retains its inherent Life, unaffected by the loss of any peripheral vitality. (4.) Nor can the human body of Christ have been touched by the consequences of *transgression* of Moral Law, as affecting the physical life of Mankind. In all He did for Man, the *Sinlessness* of Christ's perfect obedience to the Will of the Father, having been accomplished in the body of Man's Sin, is the essence of His Redemption; so, therefore, is this attribute the moral witness of the Resurrection of His body from the physical death, which Sin has entailed upon all other men. (5.) As the Righteous Lord of Humanity, He being one with God, and one with Man, it is credible that He would enter into Man's death, grave, and Hades; it is absolutely incredible that He should have finally succumbed to the inherited destiny of Man, from which, in virtue of His own Sinless *Nature*, He alone must be exempt. (6.) With relation also to the Fatherhood of God;

if He, the Creator, intended that Man should ever know for certain that He *is* his Father, with all the nearness and dearness of that relationship to Him, as a son, surely He would speak to Man's conscience and reason by sending a Person, Who as Man, yet having a Sinless nature, could alone claim to be one with Himself; and then, that He would restore Him to life from the inherited death of Mankind as the witness of His *acknowledgment* of Him. Christ's Resurrection is, therefore, a message and a pledge of the Fatherhood of God to Man; and its *moral necessity*, in this light also, is *the* evidence with regard to a miraculous physical phenomenon, which must, otherwise, rest upon the eye-witness testimony only of a few women and fishermen as the immediate witnesses, and which would be quite beyond the personal knowledge of Mankind in after ages.

As God's message of His Fatherhood, the Resurrection of Christ is the basis of that Faith which has overcome the World; for it is an answer to the gloomy questionings of Mankind, and has satisfied their cravings to discover the secret of their existence, thus to be told, beyond doubt, that they have in God, not merely a Creator, removed from them at an Infinite distance, but a Father, to Whom they can look, not with dread and despair, but with filial love and confidence.

In listening to the Voice of Nature, Man listens in vain to hear some such assurance of this personal Truth; to know what he himself really is in his littleness amid irresistible Forces, which, although he may slowly learn how to control them, certainly have no regard for him, their Master; who seems, indeed, to be ever the sport of a Power which may, at any moment, destroy him in the engulfing earthquake, in the raging ocean, in the pitiless storm, the ruthless tornado, the suffocating simoon, or by the capricious stroke of the lightning flash; but, in victory of one Man over the power of Death is seen *his* rescue from the dominion of Physical Force, and yet evidently not by his own might, but by the direct interposition of a Father Who claims him as His own. This is the Revelation which could alone set the disquietude of the human heart for ever at rest.

By the Resurrection of the Righteous Lord of Humanity He overcame the *physical* death, as the inevitable moral consequence of Sin, to which every individual member of the Human Race had thus become subject—personally, and by inheritance as one of an organic whole. ‘Forasmuch as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, He also took part of the same; that through Death He might destroy him who had the power of Death—that is, the Devil; and deliver them who through

fear of Death were all their lifetime subject to bondage' (Heb. ii. 14).

The Redemption of Man having been *concluded*—morally, by the entire reunion of his will with the Will of the Father—in the voluntary Death of Christ-Incarnate, a Self-sacrifice which Sin had rendered necessary, in order to Man's deliverance from the power of Death or the Power of the Evil One, in His Resurrection, then this restoration of the body completed the Redemption of Man by reinstating him, soul and body, in his original state of perfection, free from sin and final subjection to physical death, which had been consequent on his Animal Nature having gained the ascendancy over his Spiritual Being.

The Mosaic record of Man's deliverance from the power of Evil expressly indicates the Personality of the Deliverer to the effect, '*Thou shalt bruise his head;*' speaking thus of the offspring of Woman being engaged in the long struggle, and ultimately gaining the victory over the Enemy of the Human Race. The New Testament writers are even more explicit concerning the humanity of the Deliverer; that, '*as by man came Death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the Dead;*' and, further, that, as included in His Humanity, the personality of each man, woman, and child has already risen from physical death. '*Ye be risen with Christ.*' Such is

the matter-of-fact expression of one who, of all the first teachers, most clearly apprehended the Personality of Christ. 'I am the Resurrection and the Life'—of the Human Race, as an organic whole, and of each member personally. Consistently with the grasp of this vital truth, Paul lost sight of all else; 'was persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;' 'counting all things as dung, that he should be found *in* Him.' Verily, therefore, he that loseth his (physical) life for His sake shall find his true or spiritual life in Him, by the *power* of His Resurrection.

By His Ascension, Christ *Spiritualised* the body of Man's Redemption. He thereby made it the *permanent* bond of union with His and our Father, who Himself is a Spirit. Man is thus enabled to claim the dignity of a Spirit in his communion with God. And *in* Christ, Who is one with God and one with Man, all Mankind are connected with the World of Spirits; constituting one Family, in Earth and Heaven, as Joint-Members of Christ's Spiritual Kingdom.

The 'Holy Spirit,' coming after the Ascension of Christ's Spiritualised *body*—the body of His Resurrection—is even the Humanised Spirit of Him Who departed thus, in His Ascension—the Spirit of perfect Holiness and of Infinite Love, bearing still

the nature of His complete or Incarnate Humanity, to thus meet all the needs of Mankind, with whom He dwells invisibly.

Speaking of this Spirit, Christ clearly *identified* Himself. 'I will not leave you Orphanless, *I* will come to you' (St. John, xiv. 18). 'Wherever two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am *I* in the midst of them.' He, having become invisible to the bodily sense of vision, is still even now with His Kingdom on Earth in His Spiritualised form.

'I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.' Thus declaring that His Presence is a *perpetual* manifestation of Himself, and to the *end* of Time. Also, an *ever-growing* Personal Manifestation, 'Guiding mankind into *all* Truth.' 'Being enriched by Him in all Utterance, and in all Knowledge' (1 Cor. i. 5); 'in Whom are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge' (Col. ii. 3).

Thus, the Teaching of Christ, as the One with God and Man, transcends all purely Human Consciousness. While pre-Incarnate, He spoke for Ages in the language of metaphor, symbol, and sign, gradually educating the World up to a knowledge of Himself; when, 'in the fulness of time,' He came in the Flesh, He taught chiefly by parable, or allegory drawn from Nature, suitable to the materialistic mind of Sense-life; but, respecting Himself,

‘the World knew Him not;’ His Light shone in darkness, and the darkness of the most enlightened and cultivated minds of His contemporaries apprehended Him not—being unintelligible alike to the Jew, the Roman, and the Greek; and now that He has withdrawn His bodily presence, Ages more will pass away ere He has spoken His last word to the Conscience and to the Heart of Mankind.

Dogma, therefore, dies a natural death in the ever-developmental vitality of His Truth. Only one Being has appeared on this earth Who could claim the right to Dogmatic Teaching. He Who, at twelve years old, overmastered the doctors of Jewish Law; Who, in a momentary analysis of Human life and conduct, could pronounce the judgment, ‘On these two commandments hang all the Law, and the Prophets;’ and Who, in leaving this world, had yet many things more to say, but that His bewildered followers, with upturned, wondering eyes, ‘could not bear them’—then.



## CHAPTER IV.

'YE IN ME, AND I IN YOU' (*St. John*, xiv. 20).

'I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME' (*St. John*, xvii. 23).

THE personal connexion of every human being with, and vital inclusion in, the Personality of Christ does not, in itself, suffice to impart spiritual life. As a personal *self-determining* being, he or she, individually, must acknowledge that connexion and inclusion to make it his or her *own*.

The branch is continuous with the Vine, but physiology shows that its own inherent vitality is necessary to establish a living connexion with nutritive maintenance and growth. A dead branch may remain materially connected with the trunk—adherent thereto; but it is not nourished, and does not grow. In the nutrition of, say, the human body, the blood supply is not alone sufficient; the 'textural elements' must themselves possess and exercise the requisite vitality for assimilation. Consequently, each human being must be personally re-created *in* Christ, and afterwards live *upon* Him, no less than He be in connexion with us, without our having either such participation of His Life.

1. In the *Regeneration* of Baptism, Man is spi-

ritually born again and reconstituted in Christ by the operation of His 'Spirit,' thereby inheriting His Righteousness and Life, and as a son re-created in the Image of Him who is 'the express Image of the Father.'

The outward Sign of this new birth, simply by the sprinkling of a little water upon the Infant's body, is, of course, only the Baptismal ceremony in His appointed hands, but whereby Christ Himself has chosen to declare this dignity to have been reconferred—the renewal of Spiritual Life in the Righteousness of His Humanity. Baptism, therefore, is like the conferring of an order of Merit by a Sovereign on a subject; the ceremony does not make the merit, it is only the outward sign of the Sovereign's will in giving it.

But the Baptismal order of Merit differs in two essentials from that of any other distinctive order ever conferred. There the recipient has some claim to the honour, and yet, personally, in himself he is no better after receiving it; but the baptismal recipient has done nothing to render him worthy of his honour, and yet, personally, he passes into a new and higher state of being.

From this new birth of a human spirit, by the operation of the 'Spirit,' the *entire* human being undergoes a *vital* change; even as in natural birth the child is delivered from an unconscious state of

existence in the womb and brought into the light of physical sense in the material world.

*Post-Baptismal Sin*, *i.e.*, Sin committed after this Regeneration, does not, and cannot, annul Man’s right to the new Life, seeing that the Righteousness of the Regenerate is not his *own* property, but is derived from his personal inclusion in the Righteous Humanity—Christ-Incarnate.

But this new Spiritual Life must be nourished and sustained to the full growth and development of the inheritor.

2. In the *Communion* of Christ’s Body of Man’s Redemption He is *present* in His Spiritualised form, and is Himself, therefore, essentially and verily received, the actual ‘Flesh, profiting nothing.’

He appointed as pledges and tokens of His Spiritual Presence the symbolic representations of His Body, in the form of bread and wine, for the communication of His Righteous and Life-giving Humanity, just as these material elements themselves nourish and strengthen the natural body of Man.

The Symbolic or ceremonial aspect of the Sacraments can have no *independent* meaning in Christ’s Religion, which abolishes all that is external and formal, to introduce only that which is inward and real.

Consequently, the Sacraments, conveying inwardly that which is essential to Man’s Spiritual Life, al-

though removed altogether from the sphere of his senses, must hold a very *real* place in Christ's Religion, no less than having their doctrinal significance, by making us partakers of His Righteous Humanity. That as Christ-Incarnate was, and is ever, the one True and Perfect Man, so in His Manhood, each of us may be made a true and perfect Man, and become, moreover, in body and soul, an inheritor of His Life Eternal. Thus is the natural man made 'a member of Christ, a child (Son) of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven ;' and the Body and the Blood of our Lord (Jesus Christ), spiritually received, 'preserves him, body and soul, unto everlasting life.'

Materialism has its worshippers, even in the Christian Religion, by a certain portion of Mankind, who perceive the Flesh-and-Blood bodily Presence in the Eucharist, and who, viewing the Death of Christ as a voluntary Blood-sacrifice, fail to discern, under cover, the essence of that Atonement for Man's Disobedience which He effected solely by the Obedience of His Self-sacrifice, taking away Sin in the reunion of the Human will with the Will of the Father.

Other Manifestations and Operations of the 'Spirit' in Man. The Holy Spirit is further imparted, and has a wide range of influence on Man's being.

He is the Illuminator and the Instructor of his Conscience, which, as signifying not only the inborn

knowledge, but also the apprehensive Moral *Sense* of Right and Wrong, thus evidently testifies to the obligations Man owes to a Moral Being as its original source, however much Evolution may have developed the *knowledge*. Education might have taught Man not to murder, as contravening a law for the preservation of Society; but he could never have been thus taught that he ought at the same time to feel the remorse of a murderer, who wanders over the face of the earth, in vain, to escape from the Sense of the crime he has committed, unbeknown to all others but the Being who originally implanted that Sense in Him. Expressing His Law, Conscience itself acquires the same sovereign authority, claiming obedience, bearing witness to each act, or word, or thought of disobedience to its dictates, and registering all in the volume of the memory, whenever that Book shall be opened to its possessor.

While demanding Sovereignty, not in itself, but in perpetual homage to the Righteous Lord of Conscience, Man's Moral Sense is quickened and taught by Him, until, in the course of his spiritual education, the conscientious man is led at last to feel that, deeper than his knowledge of Right and Wrong, his only Righteousness is in Him—the Instructor, thus bringing the Divine pupil out of the comparative darkness of his natural conscience into the marvellous light of His Presence in the soul.

'Then, as the Strengtheners of his morally feeble Will, He makes him the true Man—the lord of himself, instead of being the slave of his animal nature, under the dominion of Evil. As the Spirit of Love, He is the Life-giver, inspiring every good thought and desire of which Man is capable. The Comforter in all his suffering of soul and body, giving a peace which passeth human understanding, for the recipient cannot tell whence it comes, while he is still tossed upon a sea of troubles. As the Spirit of Judgment in Man's Moral Nature, he is enabled to foresee clearly the ultimate victory of Good over Evil, in their long and fierce struggle for the mastery in himself. And as the Source of all Truth, He discloses secrets which cannot be discovered by the human Intellect alone, nor to be thus apprehended ; ever guiding the wanderer in search of new Truth ; thus Interpreting the Bible to him, or her, and revealing much beyond what seems to be conveyed literally by translating it to the conscience ; enlarging the Revelation of Christ, in all the new conditions of Man's spiritual development, to the end of the world. 'I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will Guide you into all Truth.' 'He shall abide with you for ever.' And, 'I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'



The man or woman who begins each day with some such short lesson drawn from the original source of Truth, is ‘like a tree planted by the water-side,’ which will flourish and bear fruit ; and in youth the verdure is fresher and more beautiful, the fruit riper and more abundant.

The Presence of the Spirit is not to be resolved into the mere *emotional* movements, affections, and experiences of the individual, and all of which are subject to the caprices of his, or her *physical* constitution and temperament, as affected also by varying conditions of bodily health, and the outward circumstances of Sense-life. In that way any man, or woman, may feel himself, or herself, to be Spiritually—as might be said—bright and serene, confident and exultant, to-day ; darkened and disturbed, mistrustful and gloomy, to-morrow. The Spirit of true Holiness, Himself *unchangeable*, is not subject to any of our variable moods and declensions, nor are His *operations* really affected by any adventitious circumstances, although His influence on the Human Conscience, Will, Feelings, and Intellect may be observed by the passions and lusts of the Flesh in Man’s Animal Nature.

But the Spirit plays upon the *whole* Man, and is operating not only when His Presence is realised and felt to be most powerfully at work, above the natural Powers as a Supernatural Agent, but is moving even



when He is least *recognised* by the benighted creatures He came to enlighten, to animate and sustain, to console and to guide, in the wilderness of this world.

And He visits not just certain, comparatively few, *selected*, and predisposed believing Consciences, but dwells in each and all of Mankind, without personal favour, if only He be admitted when He stands at the door and knocks gently, but always opportunely, and when, perhaps, perplexity and distress had seemed to be hopeless, humanly speaking.

The *fruits* of the Spirit are certainly affected very much by the conditions of Human Nature. The seed sown is not dropped into a virgin soil; its vitality, growth, and development being determined and impaired, perhaps destroyed, by the *mixed* constitution of human nature, and in different individuals. But the 'I in you' cannot be excluded from any man, otherwise than, and only by his own conscious and willing, desirous *resistance*, rather than by his (naturally) wilful disinclination merely to the reception of His Spirit. If, therefore, His Gospel—His Truth—when heard be hid entirely, it is hid to him only who can say deliberately—Evil, be Thou my Good..

*Faith*, or the belief in Divine Truth, does not make the *fact* which it perceives, with regard to the Regeneration or new birth of Man in Christ, His Spiritual Presence and Reception in His Communion,

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and with relation to all the other operations of His Spirit ; but the clear apprehension and realisation of these Truths, personally, *is* indeed the Regeneration and the Redemption of him who thus recognises his spiritual re-constitution to be *in* Christ. That man is *Justified* by his Faith in his own vital inclusion.

## CHAPTER V.

THE TRI-UNE GOD: THE 'FATHER' IN 'CHRIST-  
INCARNATE,' AND IN 'HIS SPIRIT.'

1. THE conception of God, not as signifying mere Fate or Necessity, but as a Personal and Righteous Being and Creator, implies that He must have a *Will* towards Man, the being He has produced.

2. His Will must have an utterance, or *Expression*, and in the Person of a Being Who is One with God and Man. He is found in Christ Jesus, the 'Word,' the 'Son,' or the Righteous Lord of Man-Incarnate.

3. To perpetuate the communication of God's Will to Mankind, there must be an *Uniting Spirit*, ever *conveying* the full and exact Expression of *Human* Perfection, and as a Third Impersonation, therefore, 'Proceeding from the Father, and the Son-Incarnate.'

The Tri-Une Personal Manifestation of God—as his Will, the Expression, as the Righteous Humanity-Incarnate, and thence His completely Humanised Inspiring Spirit—is thus felt to meet each some infinite need in Man's Spiritual Being.

This Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, which

is spelt out of Human Consciousness, is manifested also as Love : in the Person of God as the 'Father' of Man ; the Will of the Father imparting the knowledge of His Love to His Children, the 'Impersonation,' therefore, of Love as the Perfection of Manhood ; and the yet ever active 'Operation' of Love conveying this Truth to Mankind. Hence, this Third Impersonation of God's Personality is spoken of chiefly as the 'Spirit of Truth' and the 'Comforter' in the influence of His Message upon the heart of Man.

The 'Gospels' convey the Truth concerning God's Nature—as the Father, and of His Righteousness and Love, with different degrees of light ; and each Gospel-Revelation is adapted to the moral apprehension of men and women, in the different types of Human Nature. But while the Evangelists—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—speak to the more ordinary classes of persons who can best appreciate the materialistic, in miracles and parables, the full light of God's Truth culminates in the record of St. John 'the Divine,' captivating the more spiritualistic of Mankind with the very Impersonation of Love, and who, as 'God's own Image' in Man, is the pride and the flower of our Race.

To tell Mankind of a God Who is 'Uncreate,' 'Incomprehensible,' and 'Eternal,' is simply to give a Name to certain vague Qualities, and which cannot

be realised by speaking of such Qualities as a 'Person,' nor apprehended by the conception of 'Three' such Persons, and who are, nevertheless, 'One Uncreate, One Incomprehensible, and One Eternal.'

Plunged into the fathomless abyss of the Unknown, and apparently altogether Unknowable, the cravings which Man strangely feels to know God are not appeased, nor his conscience enlightened, when he is further told that the 'Three Persons,' each of an Unthinkable Nature, are 'Father,' 'Son,' and 'Holy Ghost;' for then he learns only that there is one Incomprehensible Father, and one Incomprehensible Son, and one Incomprehensible Holy Ghost; and yet they are not Three Incomprehensibles, but One Who is altogether Incomprehensible.

*This* Incomprehensible Being, 'the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped;' and 'he that will be saved *must thus* think of the Trinity.' The conscience and the heart of Man alike feel that he cannot be fed with such Mythological food, and that the God of his being could not have thus Revealed Himself to him, although formulated expressions of this kind have passed into an Ecclesiastic 'Creed.'

These and similar Impersonal Attributes cannot be *manifested* to Man's Consciousness, and they do not *satisfy* his needs. But when God is presented to Mankind in the aspect of 'Righteousness and

Love,' in One Infinite Consciousness, exhibited in three forms to meet the Finite Human Consciousness, then, indeed, do we feel that these Personal and Moral Qualities must indicate His relations to Man's Moral Nature, and then, that the three portions of the same Name—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are no longer Incomprehensible. The conscience begins to feel freedom, and the heart of Man is unburdened; for, if there be an Infinite Righteousness, there is also an Infinite Love and Forgiveness, therefore, of Transgression. The Incarnation of an All-Loving Righteousness follows as a necessary consequence, in proof of the Forgiveness of Mankind.

Try *this* Creed by everyday human experience. When a poor servant-girl of all work drops on her knees before going to bed, in a cold garret, and breathes a prayer to her Heavenly Father, entreating His forgiveness of all her Sin, and relief, perhaps, from all her sorrow, *through* Jesus Christ, does she not feel certain, however stupid and illiterate may be her way of saying it, that, indeed, He is not an Incomprehensible Person; that *in* Him, there must be a pledge of her Father's forgiveness, and of His care for her; because He, through Whom she speaks, although Himself so Perfect, is yet so Loving, and yet again so *Human*, that she sees in Him a message to herself, feeling, as she does, that she shares that Humanity which is evidently not disowned and rejected in Him?

In approaching the doctrine of Human Redemption, the Ecclesiastic Creed becomes even more unintelligible and barren. As expressing the Personality of the Redeemer, we are informed—upon the Athanasian authority—that ‘The Son is of the Father, Begotten,’ but that He is also ‘Co-Eternal’ with the Father; the begotten and the begetter both having been *Co-existent*. Furthermore, ‘it is necessary to everlasting salvation’ that the ‘Incarnation’ of the Begotten, and as the Redeemer of *Mankind*, should be conceived thus; that He is ‘God and Man’ by ‘Unity of Person, not by Confusion of Substance.’ The Redemption of Man’s Nature would thus seem to be effected by the *Substitution* of another kind of Personality for his—a Product resulting from the Union of Two Persons, who were previously separate and different in themselves; and yet united, with the maintenance of their separate Identity, *i.e.*, without confusion of Substance. The idea of *distinctness* is carried so far, that we are told of this United Personality, that He is ‘equal to God’ (the Father), in one sense, ‘as touching His Godhead,’ and, ‘inferior to God,’ in another sense, ‘as touching His Manhood.’ Here the ‘Right Faith’ almost bids us ‘believe and confess’ the actual co-existence of a Dual Personality in the Redeemer. But the Redemption or Restoration of Man to an original state of Being is evidently not the re-creation of



Man, with a new *kind* of personality, as if the former Race of Mankind had been an utter failure in the hands of their Creator. That, 'as by Man came Death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the Dead,' is the language alike of Revelation, and of the human conscience, if *he*, indeed, is to gain the victory over his body—his Animal life.

The Ecclesiastic Creed of Substitution is, therefore, here also quite untenable. On the other hand, a Righteous Being who *was* already united with Man could become His Redeemer by Incarnation, without any substitution, but with the full maintenance of identity in Man's Nature ; and which, having been originally Created and constituted in Him, His Humanity would include the whole Human Race.

High respect is due to any man of commanding intellectual power and pure conscientiousness ; and these qualities would alone secure for Athanasius 'the Great,' Bishop of Alexandria (A.D. 328), the most cautious criticism of the Creed which bears his name. But, by the common consent of Scholars, it is now known to be absolutely certain that this Creed was not the production of Athanasius. Some writers attribute it to Hilary, Bishop of Arles, A.D. 430 ; others suppose it to have been conceived by some metaphysical Spanish priests, and in the Seventh or Eighth Century. The real author is unknown.

## CHAPTER VI.

ISSUES OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN GOOD AND  
EVIL IN MAN.

I. THE History of the Human Race testifies to the Evolution of Man's Moral Nature, taking form in civilisation, and by education progressing to yet higher forms of development than those, say, of Greece and Rome, which have not, indeed, passed away, but have been transformed into the present Civilisation of the World, so far as it has hitherto advanced.

But when the course of Human development joined issue in Christianity, the Evolution of Man in Christ received a new germinal influence. The spiritual enlightenment of Man's conscience has tended in that 'stream which maketh for Righteousness' to a progressively more lively and exact discrimination between Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, Righteousness and Sin, as determined by *Self*-conviction; and, still ever obeying the Law of Evolution in its new genesis, there will be a distant, perhaps, yet *final*, self-demonstration to Human Consciousness,—to all Mankind, whether living in the flesh, or to the personalities who have passed

through physical death. That time of Judicial consummation would be the 'Day of Judgment.'

The Judgment of Man would thus appear to be the full and vivid manifestation to each Man's conscience of what he is, Morally, *in* himself, as compared and contrasted with, *i.e.*, judged by, the equally full and vivid Revelation, or Personal disclosure, of Christ's actual Presence in the consciousness of every Man—thus individually submitted to His Judgment.

2. Then must follow a division of Mankind into two widely different conditions.

(1.) The living in the healthy *activity* of all Man's spiritual powers, in fully knowing and feeling the Love of God the Father, and in seeing and loving Him in His Righteousness, and in the knowledge of all His Truth. That is one prospective state of Man's future being; for now is God known only in part, and in His Love He passeth human knowledge and understanding.

But this Apotheosis in Man's Consciousness is his *Life*. 'This *is* Life *Eternal*; that they may know Thee and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.' Hence, clearly, this knowledge does not impart the Life, but constitutes it; and the state of being in which Man experiences it has nothing whatever to do with time, or that which denotes change, but with that which is unchangeable in its nature, yet ever developmental—the *full* knowledge of God.

(2.) The *torpor* of Man's spiritual powers, in the being of him who has existed in Sense-life and Self-dom, and the full introspective knowledge of himself, coupled with the full realisation of a Fatherless, unbeloved, and lonely existence, in the solitude of a sensual and selfish self: this 'solitary confinement' of a man will be his (Eternal) *Death*, and the Torment that of his own Consciousness. 'My punishment is greater than I can bear; and from Thy face shall I be hid.' What a prospective future for him, or her, who now, living in Self-indulgence, is thus growing colder and darker every hour!

'Are there few that be saved?'—Ultimately. In the Judgment which is to determine this momentous question, the Judge has Himself declared that the broad and simple test of any Man's fitness for 'Life Eternal,' of his capacity for the full knowledge of God, is Love, as felt and exercised in the love of his Brethren here upon earth, and, unlike any earthly tribunal, that this love shall be centered in the Judge Himself. And this qualification will be accounted Man's Righteousness, although *he* might disclaim it. 'I was hungry, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.'

This inclusion of Mankind in Himself, and the

righteous nature of their love, may not be fully realised until the Judgment.

For 'Then shall the *Righteous* say, Lord, when saw we *Thee* hungry, and fed Thee, or thirsty, and gave Thee drink; when saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in, or naked, and clothed Thee; or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?'

'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, My Brethren, ye did it unto *Me*.'

In your now feeding the hungry, in your ministering to the poorest, or the outcast, the nourishment which with your loving hands is spooned into the mouth of the Sick, is really administered to *Him*.

The only evasive demurrer to this Judgment which the Unloving-Unrighteous will plead is, that they never saw the Lord of Humanity Himself in any such destitution, or suffering, or misery, and did not minister to His wants. The reply being, that inasmuch as they had never cared for one of the least of His Brethren, they had not cared for Him.

No mention is made of the bond which should bind Man to the Father of his being; for that is fully expressed by his tie to Him, Who is One with God. Possibly, also, the Test of Man's capacity for Life-Eternal will be so far-reaching, that none of the Human Race can escape the searching question; as thus including nations which for Ages before, and

since, the coming of the Light of the World could never have learned from the alphabet of Christianity to spell the Father's Name, but in whom the *inborn*-love which every Man feels for his species should have had its natural and full play. *That* question may be put, with justice, to all Mankind in Judgment—in that tremendous moment when the affairs of this perishable World shall be wound up.

So natural, indeed, is this Love-test of Human Righteousness, that when felt by the vividly enlightened Conscience, in the Judgment, not a word of self-justification will be uttered. The self-condemned will 'go away,' each individual human being, without making any plea.

But will this Adjudication determine the *final* Destiny of Mankind? The answer must depend on the *Infinite* Love of God, and the *Infinite* Redemptive Efficacy of Him Who was given, and voluntarily gave Himself, for the Salvation of all Human Beings, coupled with the *ultimate* Supremacy of Good over Evil.

## CHAPTER VII.

DEATH OF MAN.—MORAL LAW IN DISEASE AND  
CONSEQUENT DEATH.

THE living human body belongs naturally to Man's Personality—the Conscious I. Physical death, therefore, is an unnatural and violent disruption of this union. But experience tends, at least, to show that disunion is the physical consequence of Man's transgression of Moral Law, whether in the personal or hereditary history of human life ; which, operating through physical agencies, produces various states of Disease, or may be answerable for the occurrence of injury, in some of the so-called accidents to which the body is liable ; resulting in conditions of disorganization which are incompatible with the maintenance of physical life. Thus, and then, the animal organism in Man's Compound Nature is severed from that connexion with his personality, which otherwise would be indissoluble. Under these new conditions, Man dies physically, like any other animal. He may be said to shed his body.

Many physiological illustrations of the original unity in Man's Nature might be adduced. When a leg is amputated from the body, the *Person* still



complains of pain in his, or her, toes ; as if, indeed, the existence of the body was only a product, or outcome, of human consciousness. After the amputation of both legs, the person feels pain in the toes of both feet.

Fully recognising the oneness of the human personality and matter in the constitution of Man, his body is regarded by the Law of civilised communities as belonging to the Person. Hence, many acts done to the body of the owner, by any other person, are wrongs done to that person's own *property*, even more than by taking possession of his personal or real estate. Thus, slavery directly violates the inborn right of any human being with regard to his, or her, body. Can the capital punishment for murder be justified in this light ; that human Law has the right to take the life of one person who has taken the life of another person, and who is regarded as a criminal for having committed homicide ? Is the *deterrent* principle of such law for the prevention of homicide the justification of homicide ; the protection of human life, as a legal right, by the forfeiture of that life which the law never gave ?

With relation to Moral Law, the Etiology or Causation of Disease and Death opens up a wide field for far-reaching investigation.

We speak of *constitutional* diseases, of which syphilis, scrofula, and gout may be taken as pre-

senting each the greatest variety of morbid conditions, and affecting any or every part of the human body, or as entering into the production of many other diseases. The diffusion of some such constitutional disease among masses of the people is witnessed in almost every family, running through their life-history from the cradle to the grave.

But constitutional taint—syphilitic, scrofulous, or gouty—is referable to some infringement of Moral Law, some forms of indulgence of the flesh, or other wilful violation of the physical laws of health, either by the person affected, or by parents, or ancestors in the male or female line of descent ; or the responsibility may be attached to others than the sufferers, as in the wretched sanitary state of the scrofulous, owing to the moral neglect of the poor by the rich, or on the part of the legislature with regard to the care of the people.

In short, constitutional disease, as dependent on defective hygiene, is traceable to the infraction of Moral Law by some person or persons. The etiology of all other diseases admits of original investigation in the same light. Even Injuries to which Man's body is liable, and which might seem to be quite unavoidable—accidental, may yet occur under the dominion of Moral Law ; as when a drunken man falls and breaks his leg ; or, being in an unconscious state, he is burnt in a house on fire,

from which, but for his intemperance, he might have readily escaped. Indeed, the very liability to injury in such cases is not accidental; it increases with the morally *just ratio* of habitual intemperance; a liability other than chance, which a Life-office would assuredly recognise and estimate in the insurance of the drunkard's risk with relation to accidents, to which all other persons are less liable.

But if in the life-history of Man's bodily organism the natural connexion of his personality is strained by his violations of Moral Law, which, operating through physical agencies in the forms of Disease and Injury, terminate in the *disunion* known as physical death, on the other hand, in a perfectly natural state of his being, would he have voluntary control over the physical life of his *own* body, retaining it or severing it simply by the power of his Will? This proposition would seem to be far less credible, but it can be submitted to some experimental evidence, as bearing on a question which must be otherwise purely speculative.

In the death of the One Person Who alone exhibited the true and perfect Man, Whose body was begotten without any hereditary taint, as transmitted through the male side of Man's parentage, and which assuredly by no personal transgression of Moral Law had become subject to Man's death, *His* mode of dying was not in subjection to physical conditions;

He *parted* with His body, evidently, therefore, as part of Himself, simply by a *voluntary* cessation of His physical life, and at His own appointed moment ; saying, ' It is finished,' dropping His head, and giving up His life. The unfathomable depth of His Consciousness in that expression, never uttered by any human being in the moment of dying, does not affect the significant relation of His Will to the physical change which at once arrested all the functions of His body and severed it from Himself.

Subsequently His *pure*, sinless flesh, the body of the perfect Man, underwent 'no corruption,' a characteristic with reference to which the contemporaneous historians lay great stress upon its import. (Acts ii. 27 ; xiii. 37.) This physiological fact itself has a relative meaning, whatever may be the explanation of its truth. The force of chemical decomposition would seem to have been over-ruled and held in subjection by the inextinguishable vitality of the protoplasm and textural elements constituting His pure body, and which again resumed activity with the renewal of all other functions of physical life in His Resurrection, simply and solely by the invincible exercise of His Will-Power. 'I lay down my life, and I take it again.'

In the course of all the diseases and injuries to which Man's body is subject, the natural tendency to recovery in the one, and the reparative power exhibited

in the other, both alike preservative of the natural integrity of the organism, are witnessed always in proportion to the freedom of Man's personality from evil habits of physical life, and his freedom, also, from any hereditary taint of disease; representing a moral state of being, which is accompanied with a corresponding purity of the flesh. Thus conditioned, human life is prolonged often to an extreme old age, and, indeed, to an indefinite period, the personal I apparently retaining its natural hold of the organism in the maintenance of life. Pursuing this exposition of well-known clinical experience to its ultimate consequence, it is not inconceivable that, but for the intervention of morbid conditions, which are adventitious and adverse to the normal constitution of the organism, the human body might *naturally* live for ever.

PHYSICAL CHANGES IN DEATH, WITH PERSONAL IDENTITY.—During Life the body is every moment undergoing destruction by chemical decomposition, and passing away in the form of excrementitious matter; but this wasting away is restored by the assimilation of nutriment in chemical changes of composition, combined with the production of structure, in the various textures and organs of the body; a process of reformation, by the additional agency of some force, which cannot be resolved into chemical affinity, and may be named dis-

tinctively vital-formative force, in the material of protoplasm.

This double process of concurrent formation and destruction results in the maintenance of the body.

In Death the destructive half of the process is not accompanied by formative renewal, resulting, therefore, in the final victory of dissolution.

To grasp this conception of Physical Life and Death, it is unnecessary to enter into the details of the process in the changes of material transformation. Suffice to say, that atmospheric oxidation, which is subservient to the maintenance of the living organism, gains the dominion in death, reducing the dead body to carbonic acid and ammonia—gaseous forms of matter which are dissipated in the atmosphere, and soluble salts dissolved in water—which as mineral matter is reclaimed by earth, whence it came.

As Man's body is thus the battle-ground of an ever-contending aggregation and disintegration of matter, when the latter change has gained supremacy in physical death, what becomes of the Personality, the Conscious I myself, the existence of which is quite as much a *fact* as the existence of the body, and which has been proclaimed by every expression of consciousness during physical life, in every act of the will, in every sensation, thought, and feeling, as the I who thus willed to do, who saw, who heard, who thought, who loved or hated? In the moment when

the force of disintegration begins to gain supremacy over the force of aggregation, does the Personal I also become resolved in the material disintegration?

Science knows nothing of annihilation, but only of transformation. If, then, the Personal I survives with the decomposed material of the body, the latter passing only into new chemical combinations, is the Personality transformed also by breaking up into some new constitution?

1. The I differs from any chemical compound in being Conscious and of two essentialities. The I recognises all its sensations, thoughts, and feelings to be *states* only, not separable parts, of its own Consciousness, and recognises also its own *identity* while existing in all the states of its consciousness; and, indeed, that the same I thought and felt in the past as is even now thinking or feeling, or is otherwise engaged in some state of activity at the present moment.

This one indivisible and ever the same personal I is felt to be that which sees in the eye, hears in the ear, smells in the nostrils, moves the limbs, and which compares, reasons, hopes, fears, hates, loves, and remembers.

A personality which, for a period of seventy years or more, has existed in ever-changing states of its consciousness, and yet has remained itself indissoluble, and itself ever unchanged, must be quite



independent of the human body, which, co-existing, is perpetually undergoing dissolution (with renovation) day by day, and is gradually losing its identity from youth to age ; and that personality, therefore, cannot be involved in the final dissolution which the body undergoes in its death.

There can be no disintegration nor decomposition, and no metamorphosis of Man's personality, as of his bodily organism. In either case there is no annihilation ; and in the personal conscious I, no loss of its indissoluble unity and identity. Like Ocean's self, ever moving as an indivisible whole, in states of foaming wave or placid ripple, and never changing in itself : even so is Man's personality.

‘How shall we bury you?’ said Crito to the dying Socrates. ‘Quite as you please, provided you can lay hold of me, and that I do not escape you.’ Turning to his friends around, he continued, ‘I cannot persuade Crito that I, who converse with you, and arrange what I have to say to you, am indeed Socrates. He is bent on imagining that the thing he will so soon see dead is Socrates, and he asks how he shall bury me. I shall escape the moment I am dead, and thus poor Crito may regard things more calmly. When seeing my body burnt or laid underground, he will not sorrow for me as if *I* suffered pains ; he will not say at my funeral, “That is Socrates, he carries Socrates, or inters Socrates.” I

shall remain with you no longer, but go to possess felicity ineffable.'

Other contributive evidence points to the Intellectual and Moral necessity for a future state of Man's Consciousness, in the survival of the Conscious I after physical death.

2. The ever-progressive expansion of the sphere of Human Consciousness, the ever-enlarging boundary of Human knowledge, would indicate, not an abrupt termination in the change of physical death, but the continuation of Intellectual development afterwards. The Conscious I admits of Evolution in illimitable states of thought and feeling beyond the environment of Sense-life.

3. The Moral Law of Justice, and its supremacy with regard to the ultimate consequences of Good and Evil, as witnessed in the history of Nations, and of individual persons, not overlooking one's own life history, finds no complete fulfilment in the order of this World. Surely, therefore, the operation of this law will not be terminated and frustrated by the termination of Man's physical life, over-ruled at last by physical law, and leaving the moral account of the Man unbalanced by a final Judgment, for or against him.

Nor can Man himself have the power of controlling the dominion of Justice in the Moral World. The suicide, who in a moment destroys the life of

his body, cannot, consistently with the law of Justice, arrest its course with relation to himself; thus, having the voluntary power of at once releasing himself from his life-long obligations to that law, unless he exists, and in a conscious state, after death, that he may be judged thereby, according to all the deeds done in his body, for Good as well as for Evil.

But Man's intuitive Moral Sense of Right and Wrong could not fulfil its function of guiding him and adjudicating in all he does through the course of his physical life, unless there be a *post-mortem* (or after death) consciousness, when a personal account shall be taken of the retrospect in its *entirety*, and self-judgment passed with justice upon the Yes or No to the law of his being. Or, viewing Man's Moral Sense with relation to the allegiance he thus owes to the Creator of his being, his *responsibility* to Him as appertaining to all he does in his present life, and as done under the conditions of his physical existence, as clearly indicate the moral necessity for a *post-mortem* state of consciousness ere the Judgment passed upon him could be just as well as complete.

For the Judgment to be just must be conditional in the fullest and most varied sense, having relation to the individual as born, and educated, and circumstanced in the present, thus to determine a true verdict. Kings with their crowns, and rich men

with their riches, and wise men with their wisdom, and all with their sins will be arraigned ; but from very different standpoints in the Light of His Consciousness, to Whom all hearts are open, all yearning desires known, and from Whom no secrets are hid.

But even the Judge of all the Earth could not Himself do Justice to any man until after his life-record is complete. Take the case of a man who, having forged a 'will,' whereby he became possessed of an estate years ago, but who, in the last hour of life here upon earth, voluntarily confesses the fraud, and thus makes restitution to the rightful owner, instead of allowing his own successor to inherit the fortune he had so wrongfully obtained ; surely the moral account of that man's life in the body will be rendered widely different by this closing act of righteousness ; an account, therefore, which could not be justly concluded until after the final opportunity for making it complete had passed away in death.

The Psychological indications of Man's hereafter, beyond the brief tenure of his physical life, take other forms in the boundless *capacities* of his being, his Affections finding no true satisfaction nor fulfilment in the attractions presented to them through Sense-life, and his splendid Imagination no adequate sphere for its operations.

What is the language of the Muses to Man's Soul? That the Spirit breathes a new and fresh life in the ideal conceptions of Music and Poetry; that the strains of Melody are but lisps in broken accents of things unutterable in the heaving bosom of Humanity; while her Sister Muse whispers thoughts and feelings 'she can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.' The Novelist strives in vain to portray all the conceivable combinations of human character; and any such creations of Fancy's flight are without visible form. In the Drama she takes embodiment, but chiefly in the impersonation of the various passions—love, jealousy, ambition, &c., which move in the sphere of the Soul's operations here upon Earth, 'holding the Mirror up to (Human) Nature.' In Sculpture, bearing form in marble—itself cold and colourless—she is warmed with the pulses, and assumes the expressions of life, human or mythological; while the Painter throws his Soul alive upon the canvas in a thousand forms of Ideal beauty, and some of which, at least, are not of this World.

What are all these Ideal Impersonations, abstract and embodied, and any one of which is *felt*, for the time being, to *be* that of a person which the impersonator really is not, but so many expressions of the varied and illimitable capacity of Man's Personality for undergoing (personal) changes, apart from the physical life of the body, which remains

passively *identical* while Imagination is forming some new impersonation? And is this fertile power of transfiguration, say in the Soul of the Painter, to be abruptly terminated by the body losing its material identity in the cessation of physical life, which is called death?

Thus all Man's faculties, which constitute the outfit of his personal being, his boundless Intellectualism, his Moral Sense on behalf of Justice, and his Emotional Nature, all of which (in conjunction with his Will) were found in the first analysis of his Consciousness to be degraded unto the Slavery of his great Enemy, until emancipated by the Lord of his being, are now *felt* to assert themselves, each pleading with authority for a life which is to come, extending far beyond the narrow confines of Sense and Selfdom, in the highest exercise of all those faculties, and the fulness of joy with Him in the Father, Who claims the rescued as His own.

The alternative to conscious life after physical death would be this: Here am I, *conscious* of illimitable *capacity* for Evolution in the growth and development of all my various Powers, *apart* from Sense-life, *e.g.*, of Intellect, Love, Joy, emotion of the Beautiful, transfigurative power of Imagination, and yet my being is to be cut short at any moment simply by the cessation of that physical life, which had hitherto seemed to be only the *genesis* of my

Powers in the course of my Evolution. Moreover, as a Self-determining Evolutionary being, responsible accordingly, more or less, for my own growth and development ; by the event of physical death, without the continuation of my *conscious* being and personal *identity*, I shall be precluded at last from fully realising and enjoying the product of all my self-culture for Good ; or, if I have deliberately exercised my Will in the direction of Evil, I have practically incurred no responsibility to my Conscience, or to the God-giver of my Conscience, seeing that it will make no difference eventually whether I have done right or wrong in thousands of ways, for there will be no final reckoning with me in the light of Justice. Thus, all the powers which constitute the equipment of my inner being shall be abortive with regard to the consummation of their capabilities ; and my consciousness of capacity for their boundless Evolution, beyond that which is evoked by the environment of Sense-life, is either a mocking delusion or an inexplicable conundrum.

Such is the logical and inevitable outcome of physical death, *without* not simply an after state of unconscious existence, but an after Personal Consciousness, thus to fulfil the demands of Man's Moral Nature, and the Evolutionary capacity of his being. For the Conscious I, who thinks and feels, am only at present an embryonic being, sustained and



developed by physical life in the bodily organism ; relatively like the embryo body is sustained and developed within the womb. But in either case the embryo is evidently *adapted* by its structure, or by its powers, for an independent life and a new environment to bring it to maturity. Then the bodily embryo, born into Sense-life, undergoes a struggle with its surroundings, and survives in its fitness, or perishes in its unfitness, for adaptation, and thence for Evolutionary changes to perfection ; ultimately, however, yielding, degenerating into a lower state of organization, and falling into the condition of inorganic matter it *disintegrates* in death. When, in its turn, the other embryo, Myself, is born out of that physical life in the body, which had hitherto so far developed its consciousness, this immature being will also take its corresponding course of independent development ; although the body may have attained to its own full maturity, and has at last succumbed to material disintegration, the indestructible I remains intact, and is set free to continue its changes, and obviously not by dissolution, but by Evolution.

Death is commonly said to be the disunion of the thinking Soul from the Body, with the apparent termination of the *powers* of Animal life, in the cessation of their manifestations. But the change in the act of dying is really the disjunction only of the

Personal I, carrying with it *all* its attributes from the incipiently decomposing body, leaving the Man so far complete after the death of his material organism.

The innate conviction expressed by the familiar terms, 'I cannot die,' 'I shall survive' the destruction of my body, evidently proclaims, however unconsciously, a firm belief that Man's personality survives as a *whole*.

In sleep, the dreamer may dream that he is walking, running, wrestling, or exercising his Will-power in some other movement, yet without any movement whatever in the limbs of his body, the Powers of Animal Life thus being in active operation apart from any corresponding action in the body; and any such purely subjective activity would be quite unknown to a night-watcher until the dreamer, awaking, tells him of the rough and troubled night through which he—the apparently quiet sleeper—had passed in himself; as unknown to any other person as when, during sleep, the mind is actively engaged in running about the playground of childhood, or in performing some abstruse mathematical calculation, or the Soul is experiencing the ecstasies of Heaven.

But he who bends over the *dead* form of some relative or friend, just when the last look of physical life has fled, is at once conscious, as from the vacant facial expression and sudden pallor, that some great change, and altogether new, perhaps, to his experience,

has then momentarily taken place. He is moved with mixed and contending feelings by what he has witnessed. At first, awe-struck by the mystery of this change, the body lying before him has, up to that moment, ever been the personification of the relative or friend, with whom he can now no longer communicate ; the feeling of awe is, therefore, soon relieved by something akin to love and sacred care for the 'remains,' feelings which would even make the beholder treasure them as 'relics.' Oh, how natural is this confused association of the dead with the living, until a mummified form may even become invested with a kind of personality of the dead wife or child, although this misplaced attachment is not unnaturally accompanied with an instinctive loathing, however well-preserved the saintly relics ! But the living associations, of which death remains the witness and the pledge, and which, ere the funeral day, prompts the desire to take the last look at the dear, dead form, will be instantly dispelled by the intuitive thought, '*He* is gone.' Yes, he himself ; with all his individuality of character for better or for worse ; the states of moral, intellectual, emotional, and animal life which had been interwoven into the central essence of his being, the Personal, Conscious I, who thought, spoke, and acted, thus and thus, from hour to hour, in the course of ten, thirty, sixty, or a hundred years. If at the moment of his departure,

suffering has left the brow wrinkled and overshadowing, or the countenance is lit up with a celestial smile, the beholder's own consciousness affirms that neither of these facial expressions were derived, nor could have been derived, from the earth-form as earth. It was *he* who frowned with some parting agony or trouble ; or, it was *he* who smiled in death.

What passing change of consciousness occurs in that transition is inconceivable, for the guidance of experience here leaves the beholder very differently conditioned from him in whom the double-faced unity of soul and body has just been severed. Doubtless *he* still survives, and in his indissoluble connexion with the Righteous Being from Whom he derived his conscious personality ; while his body is subjected to the purely physical forces of disintegration and decomposition. And in virtue of this inseparable connexion of his consciousness with Him, we may believe that His Presence is vividly felt in the Soul even then judging the man. Thus it is that 'God judgeth no man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son,' Who is One with Man, no less than with God.

But Man's inheritance in the risen Humanity of Christ removes the sting of natural death, an event which must, otherwise, involve separation and isolation from the Life and Light of His Presence, and

also from all Mankind. He having shared the death of each human being, thus also in His Resurrection the whole Human Race is held together in His Humanity. Therefore, every man, or woman, or child may feel I shall not die alone, and I shall not live alone ; I shall not fail to see the Lord of Man with the former inhabitants of Earth, with my relatives and friends, in the land of the Living. If Christ's precious Death had saved Man from his own loss of Life Eternal, but left him with the immediate dread of separation and solitude, which death suggests, the Cross of Christ and the full power of His Resurrection would not have brought relief to the natural feelings of the human heart.

'How are the Dead raised ?' is responded to from the Grave—by the power of His own restoration to physical life ; 'but with what body do they come ?' The *incorruptible* body of the Risen Christ will be ours, equally by our inclusion in His Humanity as an organic whole.

In the resurrection of any individual human being, therefore, the material elements of his former body, the corruptible body of Sin, will not be collected from wherever they may have been scattered or dissipated, in various parts of the earth, to reconstitute his new resurrection body, but his entire personality, which survived the disjunction of physical death, will be invested with a body after the nature

of the incorruptible body of Christ. And, still reasoning from the vital inclusion of all Mankind in Him, may we not believe that this incorruptible will be after the *pattern* and like unto Christ's 'glorified body,' the Human form of the Risen Christ; that, 'if we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His Resurrection'—bodily, as well as spiritually.

On the other hand, whenever the conditions of material protoplasmic life become incompatible with the union of Man's personality, the *natural* body, in death, tends more and more to lose *its* identity; for while the Conscious I is permanently the same, as in any previous period of my life identical, although I have undergone ever-changing states of consciousness, the material of the human body is ever passing away; my body of to-day is not the same as that of my childhood. The one personality will, therefore, have been co-existent with many bodies in the course of an average lifetime, say seventy years. Any one of these bodies may subsequently enter into the formation of many other material organisms, human and otherwise; and the body which belongs to an individual at the time of death would have passed away had he, or she, have lived only a year or two longer.

The general result of all this corporeal mutability will be the physical impossibility of reclaiming for any one person in the new resurrection-body the

material which constituted the natural body, even that which existed at death, seeing that the same matter would have to be claimed for the recovery of the bodies of other men, women, and children in their resurrection. Verily, even from a materialistic view, 'that which thou sowest' (by burial in the grave) 'thou sowest not that body which shall be.'

But, in Christ, the body of Man's resurrection is to be incorruptible, that is the only expressed condition which the Christian Scripture affirms; and in connexion with his personality, Man will thus be reconstituted *potentially* identical with his former self in the state of his immortality; his undying personality, with all its powers—moral, intellectual, emotional, and physical—being conjoined with a body incorruptible, as suitable to the continuance of his being, under new conditions of Life. The natural death of Man, signifying only the temporary severance of that which is essentially himself, will thus be followed by a *full* and complete *identity* in his future destiny.

What conceivably higher destiny can there be for Man than that through which he has passed in the successive changes of his being? Degraded in this World unto abject slavery to a Mortal Enemy, in the narrow confines of Sense-life, and of a Selfish-Self, he is delivered from servitude, and redeemed in soul and body to an ever developmental state of being in the knowledge and love of God, as his



Father, and of the brotherhood of all Mankind ; regenerated, or born again, spiritually in the Person of his Deliverer and Redeemer, and living upon His Life, *in* Whom he was originally created ; then, led by His Guiding Spirit through the wilderness of this world, strengthening him in weakness, and with the ' I am with you ' giving him His hand whenever he is beginning to sink, inspiring him in perplexity, comforting him in distress ; and finally entering the grave with him, the pilgrim, resting from his labours on earth, remains not in a state of unconscious existence, but at once awakes to a new consciousness of life and light in His Presence ; equipped at last with an incorruptible and glorified body, the partner of his former shame and humiliation will then be fully equal to the environment of the new Life, when the Righteous Lord of his being shall judge of his fitness, in Love, to know the Father in all the fulness of His Truth.

Thus to be one with God ; is not this—the very apotheosis of Man, and his Life-Eternal ?

' That God, which ever lives and loves,  
One God, one law, one element,  
And one far-off Divine event,  
To which the whole Creation moves.'

TENNYSON.



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